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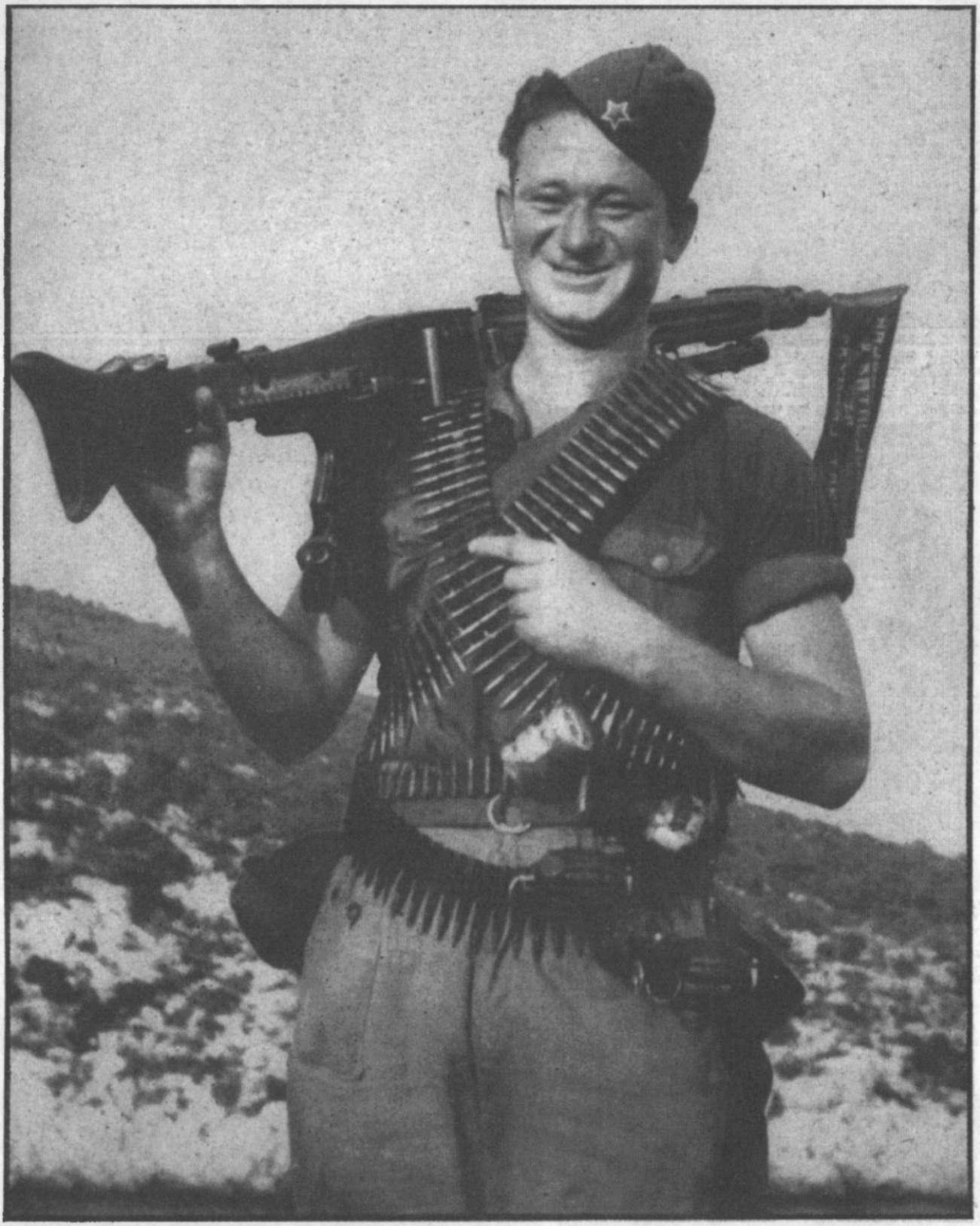
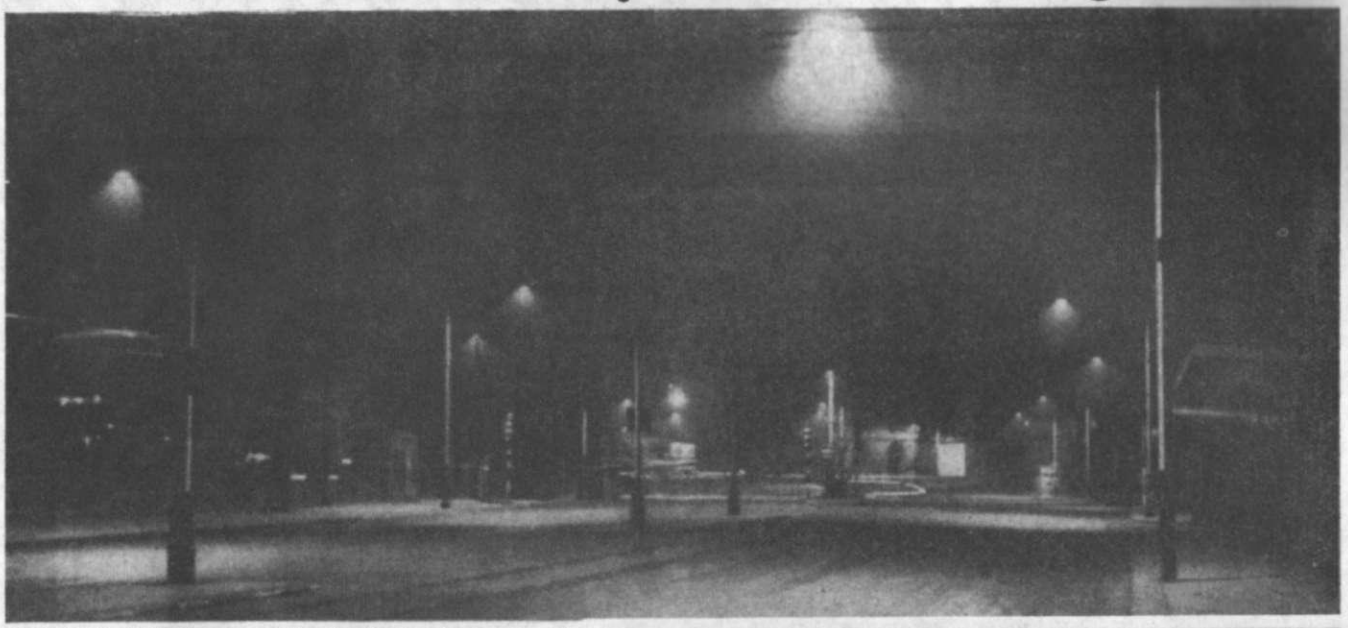
Edited by Sir John Hammerton

SIXPENCE OCTOBER 13, 1944



**YUGOSLAV WALKING ARMOURY,** this smilingly confident partisan of Marshal Tito's National Army of Liberation sets out to harass a German retreat line. So successful was their offensive launched against the Germans—with the co-operation of the Royal Navy, units of Land Forces Adriatic and aircraft of the Balkan Air Force—on Sept. 8, 1944, that by Sept. 17 the Dalmatian islands of Korcula, Hvar and Brac had been freed. Four days later Tito's forces were drawing their net around Belgrade. *Photo, British Official*

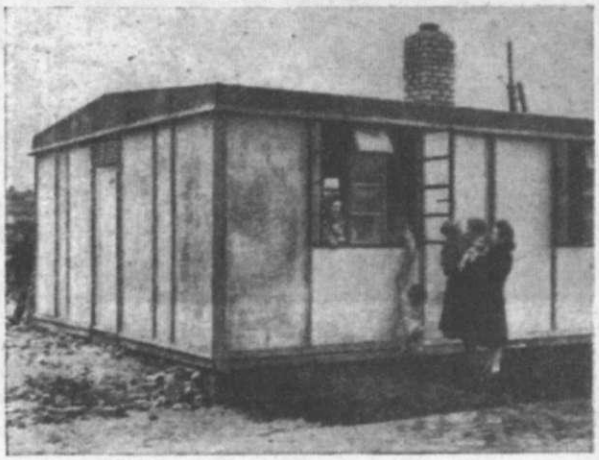
# At Home and Far Away with Our Roving Camera



**BRITAIN'S DIM-OUT** succeeded the black-out on Sept. 17, 1944, when a modified form of lighting appeared in many thoroughfares. A street scene in Rochdale, Lancs, the first English town to have the new "side street standard" lighting in operation. Other towns will follow suit as labour permits.

**REPATRIATED PRISONERS** of war from Germany, numbering 1,025, received a tumultuous welcome on Sept. 15, 1944, when they arrived aboard the British liner Arundel Castle, at Liverpool.

**EMERGENCY HUTS** totalling 10,000 to provide temporary homes for 50,000 bombed-out people in the London area during the winter formed part of the recent plan for rehousing the homeless. Below, one of the prefabricated huts.



**RUMANIAN-SOVIET ARMISTICE** was signed in Moscow on Sept. 13, 1944, by Mr. L. Patrascanu, head of the Rumanian delegation. Soviet Foreign Commissar Mr. Molotov is seen on the extreme left; Marshal Malinovsky, commanding the 2nd Ukrainian Front, signed for the Soviet Union.

**"HELLO, THERE, FRANK, OLD BOY!"** was Mr. Churchill's greeting to President Roosevelt when these two great leaders met for discussions on the future conduct of the war, at the second **Quebec Conference, on Sept. 11, 1944. They** ended their talks on Sept. 17.

*Photos, British Official; Planet News, Keystone, Pictorial Press, New York Times Photos*

# THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

EVERYONE admits that airborne troops have done most valuable work in Burma, in Algeria, in Sicily and in the Normandy landing, but I think some may have doubted whether the achievements of the comparatively small forces used on those occasions warranted the formation of a large airborne army. It may be argued that as airborne troops must always be comparatively lightly armed and have little mobility after landing, their offensive potentialities are limited, and though they may seize by surprise and be able to defend important localities there is always a considerable risk of their being overwhelmed by the enemy's reserves before they can be supported by more heavily armed forces.

The decision to form a large airborne army has, however, amply justified itself. They may greatly accelerate the advance of the main armies; and the enemy's shortage of reserves minimizes the risks run by their bold use well ahead of supporting forces. There is no reason to suppose that the airborne army was constituted especially in anticipation of the situation that developed in Holland, but it is hardly possible to conceive a situation which would give better opportunities for its effective use.

Not only was the enemy short of reserves, greatly disorganized and deeply committed to his encounter with the British 2nd Army, but he still had fears of a seaborne invasion. which smaller detachments could be usefully employed. The knowledge that large airborne forces exist adds to the problems which confront the German commanders. The necessity of retaining reserves available to deal with possible airborne landings will tend to cause dispersion of forces somewhat similar to that caused by fear of seaborne landings—a fear which was the primary cause of the destruction of the 15th and 19th German Armies in France.

## A TOKEN Battle to Save Hun Commander's Honour

It will be noted that so far there have been no signs of a co-ordinated German withdrawal to a shorter front either in the east or the west. Practically everywhere German armies are fighting bitterly where they stand, even where, as at Brest, resistance was continued after it had ceased to serve a useful purpose; or as in Italy, where refusal to retreat seems to invite disaster. It is perhaps premature to claim that this tends to confirm my theory that the Reichswehr generals, apart from those willing to obey Hitler's instructions, are in the main fighting to maintain the honour and traditions of the Reichswehr and are determined that the final battles of the war should as far as possible be fought outside German territory or on its frontiers.

That the generals have different views on what will satisfy their conceptions of honour

**FALL OF PRAGA, Warsaw suburb east of the Vistula, announced by Marshal Stalin on Sept. 14, 1944, marked the end of the first phase in the battle for the Polish capital. Praga witnessed fierce house-to-house fighting before the Russians and Poles finally beat down German resistance. The victorious forces included Russian troops of the 1st White Russian Front and soldiers of the 1st Polish Army. Soviet infantry are seen (above) entering the suburb.** *Photo, Pictorial Press*

That was one side of the picture; on the other it could be seen what immense assistance would be given to the 2nd Army if stepping stones were secured over the three great rivers, the Maas, the Waal and the Lek, which seemed likely to delay greatly, if not to stop, its advance. These rivers formed a deep triple obstacle, and given time they might be strongly defended. On the other hand, their passage meant that the line of the Rhine, which elsewhere provided a second defence position behind the Siegfried Line, would be turned.

FURTHERMORE, the operation gave a good prospect of cutting the lines of retreat of the large German forces still in western Holland, since the main railways leading to Germany run parallel with and close to the rivers. Whether such an opportunity for employing airborne troops in great force will ever recur is doubtful, but in any case there are certainly likely to be occasions in we may conclude by comparing the attitude of the German commander at Brest with that of the conduct of the commander of the strong group that surrendered near Orleans. The proposal of the latter that there should be a token battle to save his honour savoured of the Middle Ages, if not of comic opera. There no doubt have been many humorous episodes during the war, but surely none on such a large scale.

The situation in Holland is, at time of writing, much the most interesting; partly because novel features have been introduced and partly because it would seem to give greatest scope for generalship. But the situation on the front of the American Armies has also special points of interest. All three armies are now meeting stiff resistance, and the great speed of their progress has been checked: that of the 1st Army on the Siegfried position, and that of the 3rd and 7th Armies in front of it, in the Lorraine and Belfort gaps respectively. The 1st Army has penetrated far into, if not completely through, the Siegfried defences and has clearly proved that these defences were not as formidable as was expected.

IT has been found that they were inadequately armed and held by second-class troops, but the main weakness was that the Germans did not have the reserves or artillery support required for effective counter-attacks. On the Lorraine front and in the Belfort gap the Germans appear to have concentrated the best of their reserves, and there resistance has been more effective than on the 1st Army front, although the troops have depended more on cover provided by natural features and on counter-attacks than on artificial defence works. The exceptionally strong works of the fortress of Metz have resisted attack, but like all fortresses it absorbs large forces for its defence, which must ultimately be sacrificed if the place is surrounded.

**457,346 HUNS 'IN THE BAG'**

German prisoners taken by five armies of the Allied Expeditionary Force on the Western Front since D-Day (June 6, 1944) amounted to 457,346, it was announced on September 21, 1944, the total being made up as follows:

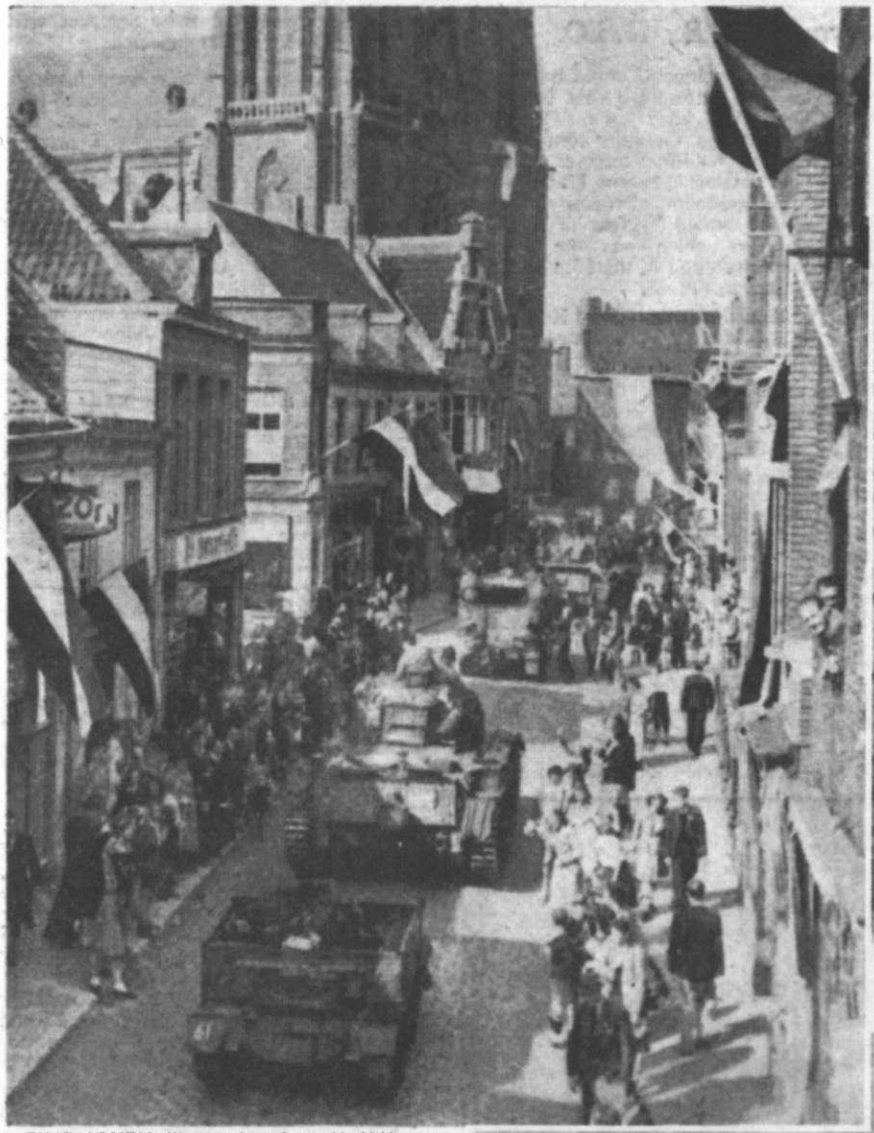
| | |
|---|---|
| British 2nd Army | 73,000 |
| Canadian 1st Army | 52,971 |
| U.S. 1st Army | 173,375 |
| U.S. 3rd Army | 76,000 |
| U.S. 7th Army | 82,000 |

If a fortress cannot be used as a pivot for a major counter-stroke, as is the case now with Metz, its main function is to block railway lines or roads that the attacker would need as he advances; but a large fortress is generally a wasteful means of achieving that object. General Patton's Army has been reinforced and is now making steady if slow progress east of the Moselle. It will be interesting to see whether the Germans opposing him will, as they are driven back, attempt to make a decisive stand on the Siegfried Line or merely use it as a delaying position. There would seem to be a considerable likelihood that they may be too exhausted and disorganized when they reach it to make use of its full potentialities and in any case by that time it may have been turned by General Hodges' Army advancing through Luxembourg.

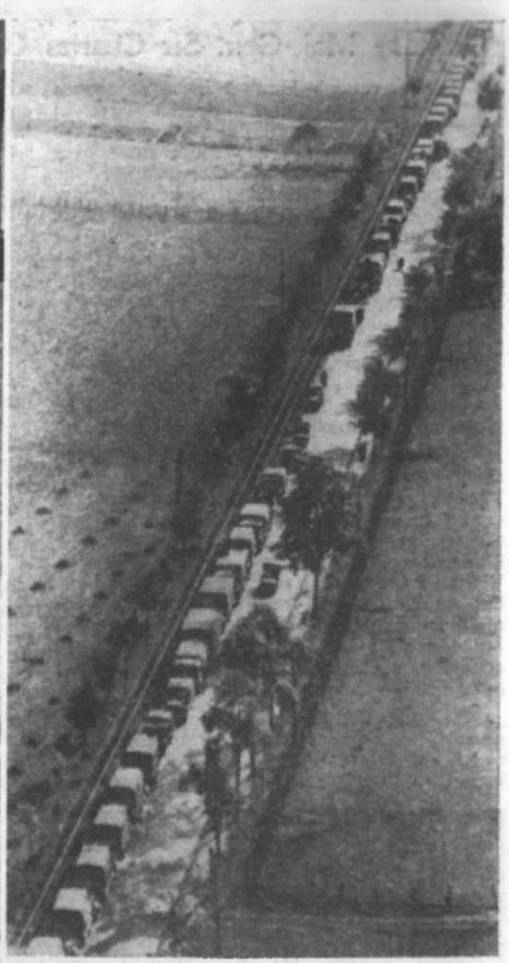
## MALINOVSKY'S Westward Drive Reaches Hungarian Plain

On the eastern front the main Russian offensive against East Prussia and in Poland has not yet been launched, although Rokossovsky's capture of Praga, and Zakharov's of Lomza and the line of the Narew, are preparatory steps of great importance. Meanwhile, however, the Russians appear to have decided to deal once for all with the German armies in Estonia and Latvia which might at last make an effort to escape, now that the surrender of Finland has removed the chief strategic object they may have had. Already the Estonian group has lost the ports by which it in part has been evacuated, and its main communications with the Latvian group have been cut. The Latvian group is in hardly a better position now that Bagramyan's renewed offensive has almost reached Riga. In the south, Hungary is almost equally threatened; for Malinovsky's westward drive has reached the eastern side of the Hungarian plain, and Petrov's 4th Ukrainian Army is striking from Poland into the northern Carpathian passes. Still farther south, Tolbukhin's advance through Sofia towards Nish in the Morava valley, and Tito's increasing strength, make the withdrawal of any considerable part of the German forces in the Aegean Islands, Greece and Yugoslavia almost impossible. As these groups are liquidated full Allied power will be released for the final encounter.

# Thrusting Through Holland Towards the Ruhr—



**EINDHOVEN**, liberated on Sept. 19, 1944, was the first large town in Holland to fall to Allied forces. Citizens waved and cheered in the beflagged streets as British armour passed through in the direction of Nijmegen.



**BRITISH 2nd ARMY VEHICLES** formed this great convoy moving up in Holland. It was reported that one column stretched for 60 miles as it made its way from Belgium towards the Dutch frontier.

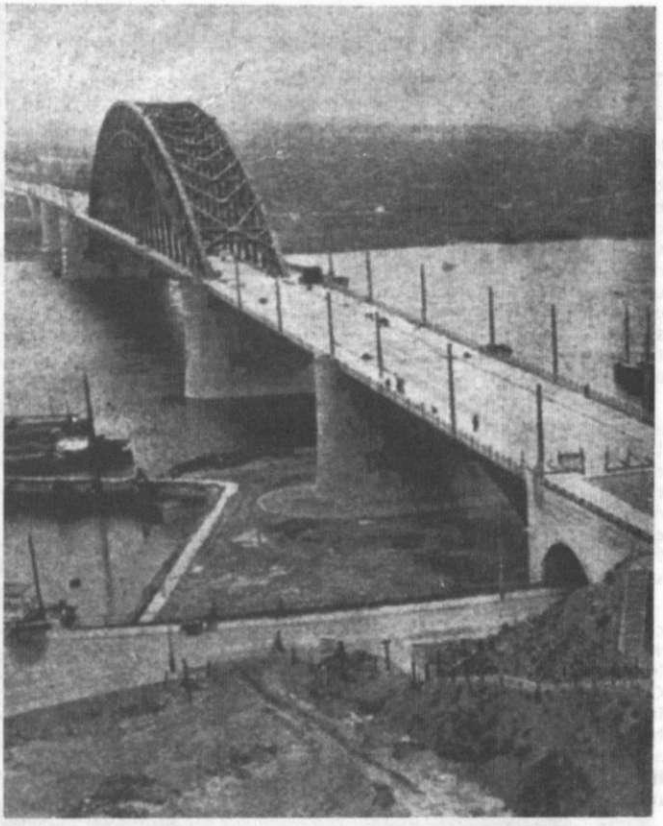
**DUTCH RESISTANCE MOVEMENT** members rounded-up many stray Germans as our men pushed onward, clearing towns and villages of the enemy. These patriots (left) made their first capture at Valkenswaard, a town close to the Dutch-Belgian border (see also illus. p. 341). The fury of the present and the peace and calm of the past were strikingly contrasted as British tanks rolled on towards the front through characteristic Dutch scenery (right).



*Photos. British Official*

# —Bitter Was the Fighting for Nijmegen Bridge

**ONE OF THE GLIDERS** which carried troops of the 1st Allied Airborne Army to Holland crashed in a turnip field without injury to the crew. Dutch civilians hastened to offer assistance.



**NIJMEGEN ROAD BRIDGE**, spanning the Waal, or Dutch Rhine (top right), captured intact by Sept. 21, 1944, was taken in the face of German anti-tank and 88-mm. guns holding the southern approach. U.S. airborne infantry forced a crossing of the river 3 miles downstream and captured the northern end of the bridge. After 2½ hours of fierce fighting British tanks penetrated the southern defences: above, they are seen carrying U.S. airborne troops on the way to Nijmegen.



*Photos, British Newspaper Pool, U.S. Official, E.N.A*

# THE WAR AT SEA

*by* Francis E. McMurtrie

For some little time past, naval operations against Germany have been gradually assuming a different complexion. No longer does one hear of determined attacks on convoys in mid-Atlantic by "wolf packs" of a dozen or more U-boats. That submarine attacks have ceased is by no means true; but they have fallen off so much in vigour, frequency and extent that it may be fairly said that they no longer constitute a serious menace to our communications. Of course, this is no reason for the slightest relaxation in vigilance, for given the opportunity the danger would soon reassert itself.

As it is, with no port in Western Europe at their disposal south of the Scheldt, the U-boats must find themselves severely restricted in their approaches to the trade routes. Our anti-submarine forces, on the other hand, have fewer exits to watch, enabling them to concentrate all the greater force at any particular point when the occasion arises.

Still more remote is the date when a raid on commerce by German surface warships was to be feared. The Bismarck and Scharnhorst lie at the bottom of the sea; the Gneisenau is reported to be a dismantled hulk in a Baltic port; and the Tirpitz, having sustained damage in four Allied attacks, seems less likely than ever to leave her remote anchorage in the innermost recess of the Altenfjord.

German coastal forces have suffered heavily in evacuating French ports, and are likely to incur further losses before they leave those of the Netherlands. It would seem from a recent utterance of Grossadmiral Dönitz that the Reichsmarine has been given the thankless task of sacrificing itself in the hope of saving some remnants of the German Army threatened with capture as one port after another on the French, Belgian or Italian coast is invested. Small naval craft are given the desperate task of running the blockade of these ports in the hope of bringing away high military officers or technical specialists. Larger vessels with no chance of escape are sunk in harbour entrances as blockships. Some of the garrisons of French ports are reported to have been stiffened by a reinforcement of picked naval officers and men.

With the fall of Brest was revealed the extent and massiveness of the construction of the celebrated U-boat pens. It has been reported that these are roofed with concrete 15 feet thick, and that preparations had been made to add another eight feet to it. No wonder there were few penetrations as the result of Allied bombing! As most of these cave-like shelters appear to have been left intact, they will presumably be taken over by the French Navy as part of the facilities of the naval base, which have otherwise been considerably reduced by enemy demolitions.

## Ports Threatened by Latest Allied Advances in Italy

In Northern Italy several ports of importance are about to fall into Allied hands. First of them is likely to be Spezia, headquarters of an Italian maritime department in peacetime. A town of over 100,000 inhabitants, it possesses both constructional and repair facilities. The disabled cruisers Bolzano and Gorizia are believed to be there; these are ships of 10,000 tons with main armaments of 8-in. guns. Also there is the new fast cruiser Claudio Tiberio, of 3,362 tons, which is probably still incomplete, and two obsolete cruisers of negligible value, the Bari and Taranto. The last-named, which was originally the German Strassburg, was taken over by the Italian Navy under the conditions of the Peace Treaty of 1919. In 1935-37 she was refitted, and according to the latest reports was wrecked by Allied bombers last August as the Germans were endeavouring to utilize her as a blockship.

Somewhat farther north is Genoa, with a normal population of close on 650,000. Though bigger than Spezia, it is of less consequence as a naval base, but has more important shipbuilding resources. These may by now have completed four fast cruisers of the 3,362-ton type, the Cornelio Silla, Paolo Emilia, Claudio Druso and Vipsanio Agrippa, but in view of the shortage of materials this is very doubtful. The Germans are able, however, to dispose of a certain number of smaller vessels.

On the other side of the Italian peninsula the three principal ports threatened by the Allied penetration of the Gothic Line are Venice (headquarters of a maritime district), Trieste and Pola. Such warships as exist are believed to be concentrated at Trieste, where the torpedoed battleship Conte di Cavour was taken for refit after her long stay on the mud in Taranto harbour; damage is believed to be so extensive that it is questionable if she will ever be fit for service again. At Trieste also is the 35,000-ton battleship Impero, built at Genoa, and brought from there in semi-complete condition in 1943. Neither of these ships is likely to offer serious opposition to our advance, except possibly as floating batteries for the defence of the port.

They may have suffered from the attentions of Allied aircraft, which recently succeeded in reducing to a wreck the Trans-Atlantic liner Rex, at Capodistria, not far from Trieste (see illus. on this page). Two cruisers of 4,200 tons were laid down at Trieste in 1939 for the Siamese Navy. Though they were in due course appropriated by the Italians and later by the Germans, it is improbable that they have been finished. Though shipbuilding facilities exist at Venice, that dockyard is primarily for maintenance.

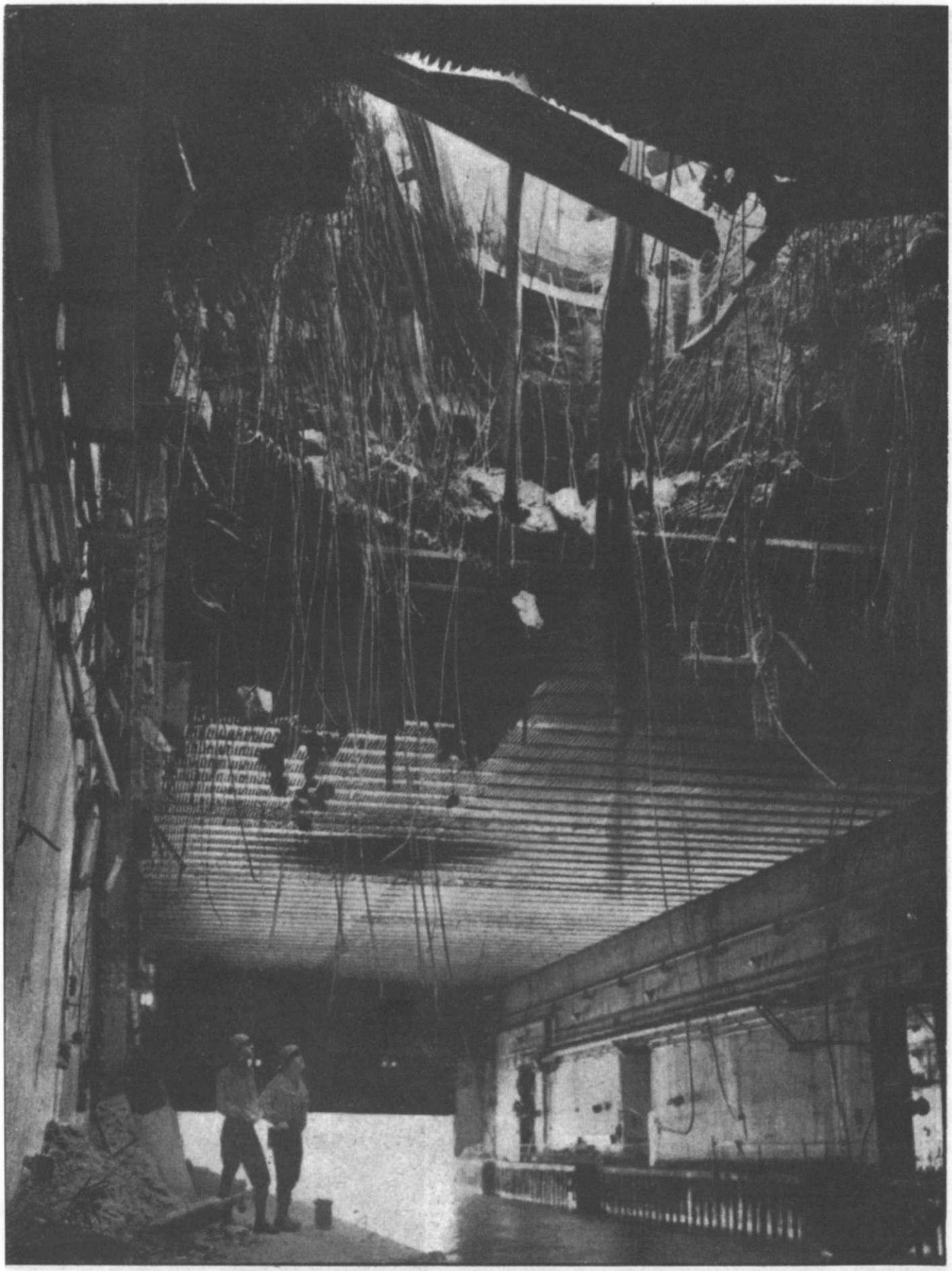
In the Netherlands, now in process of liberation, there are important shipbuilding centres where incomplete fighting ships may be found. Farthest south is the Schelde yard at Flushing, where torpedo craft and submarines used to be built for the Royal Netherlands Navy. An incomplete destroyer, in tow, was the target for an air attack there last month. The Wilton-Fijenoord combine at Schiedam is also an important yard, building destroyers and submarines.

Another extensive undertaking is the Rotterdam Dry Dock Company, which used to divide orders for destroyers and submarines with the Wilton-Fijenoord Company. At Amsterdam is the Nederlandsche Scheepsbouw Maatschappij, which built the Dutch cruisers Sumatra, Heemskerck and Tromp. It may be assumed that the Germans have not failed to make the utmost use of all these resources to supplement their own, which have suffered heavily from bombing.

A little-known section of the Royal Navy which is concerned with the clearance and rehabilitation of wrecked ports taken from the enemy is the Salvage Division. Though little publicity has been given to its work, its skilled personnel have rendered invaluable service in this direction.

**ITALIAN LINER REX, intended by the Germans to be used as a blockship in Trieste harbour, was bombed by rocket-firing Beaufighters on Sept. 8, 1944. The attack was carried out in two waves, and the Rex sustained 123 hits. Above, rockets falling near the ship. Right, two-thirds submerged, smoke rising from stem to stern.** *Photos, British Official*

# Those U-Boat Pens Were Not So Bomb-Proof!

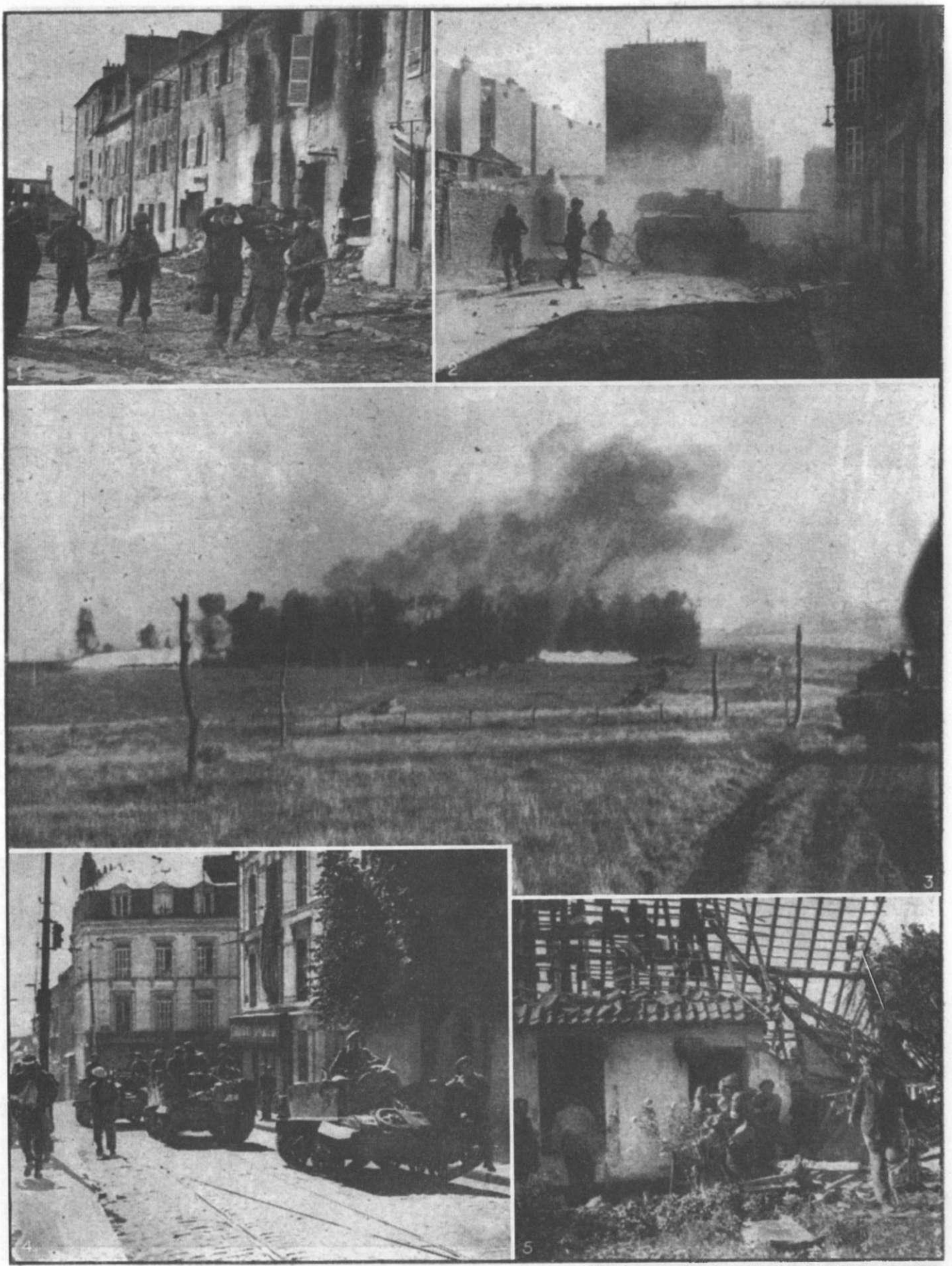


**THE 40-FOOT HOLE IN THE STEEL-AND-CONCRETE ROOF** of this U-boat shelter at Brest is marked up to the credit of the R.A.F. Others of these notorious submarine pens, claimed as absolutely bomb-proof by the Germans, and from which they had so frequently launched attacks against Allied shipping in the Atlantic, were found in similar condition—cracked wide open by block-busters—when U.S. forces under General Middleton took possession of the port. The garrison, commanded by General Ramcke, ran up the white flag on Sept. 19, 1944.



*Photo, British Official*

# Fiercely Contested Channel Ports Regained

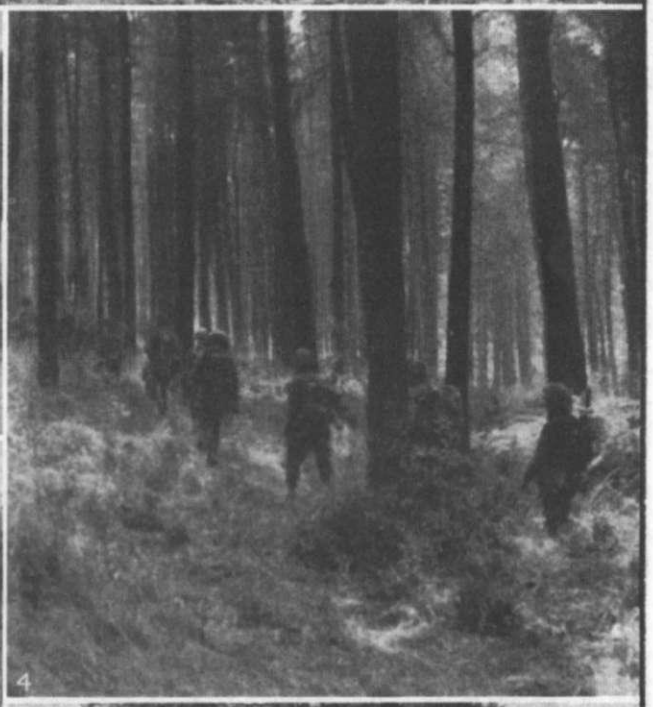


**ISOLATED ENEMY RESISTANCE POINTS** on the French coast fell one by one to the Allies in September 1944. Brest capitulated by Sept. 20 : Germans are rounded up (1), and a tank destroyer fires its 75-mm. gun to clear a street (2). Flame throwers went into action in the final attack on Havre (3) ; Bren carriers entered the town (4), which surrendered on Sept. 12. Near Boulogne, in Canadian hands by Sept. 21, R.A.M.C. men, assisted by French civilians, evacuated British wounded under fire (5).



*Photos, British and U.S. Official ; British Newspaper Pool, Keystone*

# Blasting at Last Through the Siegfried Line



**THRUSTING INTO THE REICH,** men of Lieut.-General Hodges' U.S. 1st Army crossed the Luxembourg-German frontier north of Trier on September 11, 1944. Within 24 hours a second powerful American wedge had been driven into Germany, infantry and tanks penetrating 10 miles south of Aachen into the Aachen State Forest (4) on their way to attack the Siegfried Line defences.

On September 15 the Line was breached: infantry and engineers clearing away series of steel road obstructions (1). A jeep with trailer follows a path blasted by American engineers through concrete "dragons'-teeth" (2). The problem set by a 15 ft. tank trap was surmounted by this jeep (3). U.S. infantrymen march towards Aachen (5); by September 16 the city was virtually surrounded.

*Photos, Associated Press, Planet News*

# British Second Army's Epic Dash to Brussels

Lieut.-Gen. B. G. Horrocks, C.B., D.S.O., who commanded the British corps which, at the end of August 1944, covered the 206 miles from Vernon on the Seine to Brussels in only 6 days, here tells how the Belgian capital was captured by brilliant desert tactics. This astoundingly swift advance is outstanding even among the whirlwind achievements of modern mobile warfare.

THE advance began with the capture, on August 6, of Mont Pincon in Normandy, a vital feature which dominated the whole countryside and without which the forward movement would have been impossible. It was captured in twenty-four hours' heavy fighting by tanks and infantry. Six tanks fought their way to the top and stayed there among the enemy for three hours, until the infantry arrived.

The Germans showed all the familiar signs of cracking, the same as in the desert, during the push from Mont Pincon to Condé. It was necessary to keep up constant pressure, attacking daily in spite of the weakened state of some divisions, which suffered considerable casualties, especially among the junior officers. We literally blasted our way to Condé, using concentrations of guns wherever we were held up. Every operation we did was simple. We didn't try anything complicated.

The crossing of the Seine at Vernon was "a little classic." American troops had pushed up along the river banks from the south and captured the town. Then the entire British corps was moved across their lines of communication at the same time as they were pulling back. This was carried out without one serious hitch. On August 24 the British began concentrating a force of infantry and bridging material at Vernon. It was done with great secrecy, and British troops were not allowed to go near the river banks, where they might be seen by the Germans, who believed there were only Americans there.

## To Dominate the Crossing

The entire force formed up at Vernon without the enemy's knowledge. Then, at 6.30 p.m. on August 26, all available artillery and mortars suddenly laid down a barrage, and the infantry began crossing the river (see illus. page 298.) They crossed under cover of a smoke screen in ducks and assault boats, some of which got caught on submerged islands because the level of the river had changed. The bridge-head was consolidated next day, and the troops who had crossed were ordered to go on in every direction and dominate the crossing for at least ten miles. All the armour for the push to Brussels moved eastwards across the Seine into the wide bridge-head and was ordered to start the push from a situation which can only be described as "untidy."

We had got across and had to get the Boche going, and it wasn't the time for tidiness! The leading armoured units, which cleared the way for the main force, had covered 18 miles against steady opposition by August 29. By August 30 the main armour was up, and the fast push to the east began.

It wasn't a push round the flanks; we had villages with enemy in ahead all the time. We found as many as eight 88-mm. guns in some villages. The key-point of the advance came when the armoured columns, which had already advanced 25 miles against steady opposition to the Beauvais area, were ordered to push on all night for Amiens.

THE tanks covered the additional 43 miles in the night and captured the Amiens bridges intact by the first light. August 31, 1944, was spent in crossing the Somme, and on September 1 the armour was ordered to push on to Arras and Douai, using the same tactics as in their advances in the desert, and covering the 40 miles in the day, leaving the flanks open. Our flanks were exposed, but you've got to take chances! The shortest distance covered in one day was 15 miles of difficult country towards Douai. The next day the tanks raced 75 miles to Brussels, and Antwerp was entered on September 4.

The men were magnificent. When we bumped into opposition the tanks got behind it and the infantry followed up. One infantry division held 65 miles of road during the advance, with the Germans trapped between the British and the coast, trying to break out. The Germans so trapped were variously estimated at between 120,000 and 200,000. They consisted of men from many units, including the "Duodenal Division" of elderly men. Some of these were in the fighting at Antwerp, where the commander of the German division was captured. Prisoners from 182 different units were taken in this area.

## Germans Were Left Guessing

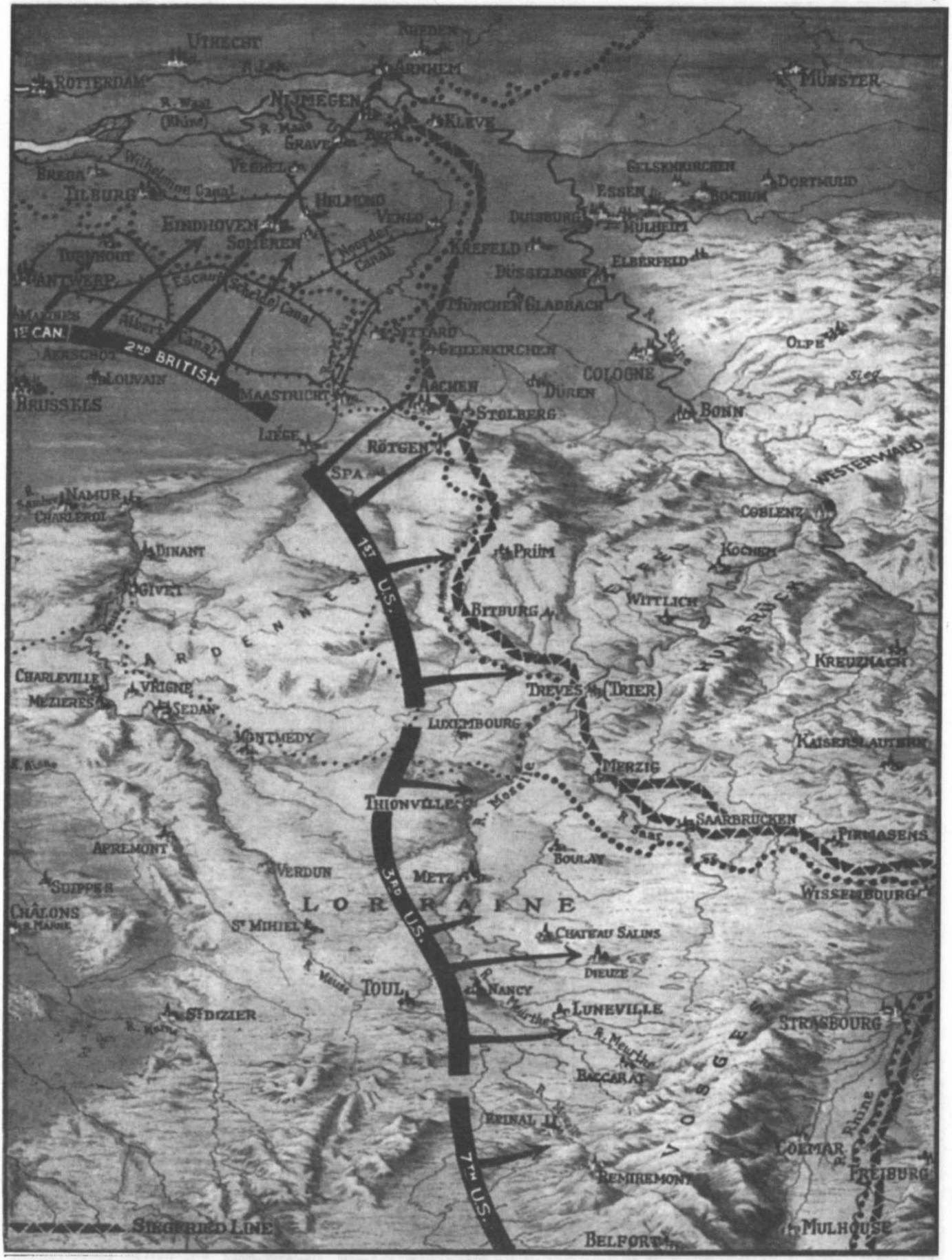
The speed of our advance was largely due to the help of the French Maquis and the Belgian "White Army." They were given the tasks of preventing bridges from being blown up, reporting mines and mopping up by-passed pockets of the enemy. They carried them out everywhere unless the enemy was too strong, when troops were sent to help them. They are very brave chaps.

Co-operation between the British and the Americans also speeded up the advance. The Americans, at the request of the British, cleared Tournai for the tanks. There was no organized front in this area, and the Germans did not know exactly what troops they had ahead of us. The S.S. troops were still fighting, and unless we finish the S.S. it is sure that our children will be doing it in 20 years' time.

*From an interview given by Lieut.-Gen. B. G. Horrocks to British United Press war correspondent William Wilson, in Brussels.*

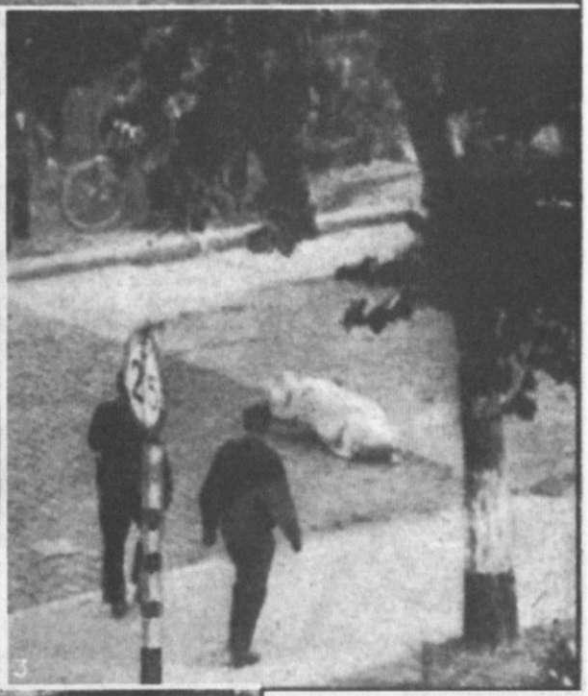
**Lieut.-Gen. B. G. HORROCKS, C.B., D.S.O. (left of centre group in top photo) watched British 2nd Army men pass through Amiens, which was entered on August 31, 1944, on their way to Brussels. The town was reached after an all-night drive through rain and mud; the speed and surprise of our entry prevented the destruction of three bridges over the Somme, although demolition charges had been prepared under them. Above, a 17-pounder anti-tank gun in a street of Antwerp, which was freed on September 4.** *Photos, British Official*

# Line-Up of Our Forces Against Western Germany




**DISPOSITIONS IN LATE SEPTEMBER 1944** of the five Allied armies under Gen. Eisenhower; arrows show directions of thrusts at Germany. From Brussels to Belfort direct is 255 miles. Lieut.-Gen H. D. G. Crerar's 1st Canadian Army and Lieut.-Gen. Sir Miles Dempsey's British 2nd Army form the 21st Army Group commanded by Field-Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery. Lieut.-Gen. C. Hodges' 1st and Lieut.-Gen. G. S. Patton's 3rd U.S. Army constitute the 12th Army Group commanded by Major-Gen. O. Bradley. The 7th U.S. Army is led by Lieut.-Gen. A. M. Patch.

# How the Wehrmacht Scrambled out of Belgium--



**CLEARING OUT** of Brussels and Malines as victorious Allied armies advanced, in September 1944, retreating Germans took all they could lay hands on. Belgian civilians who had looked forward to these days of liberation, through four tormenting years of enemy occupation, watched their former conquerors depart: German troops left the Belgian capital by the northern exit and took with them quantities of flour in horse-drawn carts (1). Other Huns made haste to board the last tram from Brussels (2) at 2 p.m. on Sunday, September 3, as British advanced tanks approached from the south.

Citizens of Malines were entertained by the comic spectacle of a reluctant pig which escaped into the road from a German truck (3) as numerous lorries piled with loot, including boxes of food and cases of wine, wended their way out of the town. (4). Cyclists escaped on machines stolen from civilians. The photographs on this page were taken secretly by two Belgians at the risk of their lives.

*Photos, Planet News, New York Times Photos*

# —With British Troops and Armour at its Heels

**OUR ADVANCE** towards the Belgian-Dutch and German frontiers was further speeded on September 17, 1944, by a great airborne landing in Holland itself (see p. 349). Hard fighting had occurred along the Albert Canal in Belgium, but by Sept. 12 the enemy defences before Holland had been smashed.

British infantry rode on Sherman tanks to clear pockets of resistance near the Dutch frontier (1). Heading for Holland, our armoured units drove past the world famous Town Hall in Louvain (2). Under covering fire from a Bren gun, infantrymen dashed across a bridge in the Antwerp docks area to take up new positions (3). Self-propelled U.S. 155-mm. guns mounted on Sherman tank chassis were the first heavies to fire into the Reich; the target was S.W. of Aachen on the Aachen-Liége road. The guns opened their barrage with 21 rounds of 100-lb. H.E. shells (4). By Sept. 19 American troops had advanced 11 miles through the Siegfried Line in the Trier sector.

*Photos, British Official; New York Times Photos, Planet News*

# The Rise and Fall of Hitler's Flying Bombs

"Except possibly for a few last shots, the Battle of London is over," declared Mr. Duncan Sandys, M.P., Chairman of the War Cabinet Committee on operational counter-measures against the flying bomb, on September 7, 1944. How Germany's attempt to destroy London with her vaunted V1 weapon was foiled makes one of the most memorable war stories. See also pages 335-338.

"DIVER, diver, diver!" The words drummed into the ears of a telephone operator at Air Headquarters, Air Defence of Great Britain, a few minutes after 4 o'clock in the morning of June 13, 1944. The code message came from the Royal Observer Corps station at Dymchurch, Kent; it marked the moment for which the authorities had long been prepared.

Two members of the Corps had seen the first flying bomb, approaching over the sea, and in less than 40 seconds their warning in code had been received at headquarters: the whole intricate machinery of defence was at once set in motion, to what effect has been recorded by Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C., in page 316. The "human side" of this great story contains material for many an epic narrative.

Difficulties of our airmen in getting to grips with this devastating weapon, especially in the early stages of the battle, can be summed up in the following statements:

"We found that by getting in to 200 yards' range we could hit the target. If we were farther away we missed. If we were nearer our aircraft were liable to be damaged by flying debris. In fact, quite a number were brought down. After the first fortnight or month we had so improved our tactics that we were knocking down at least 80 per cent of our sightings. The three squadrons in my wing destroyed 600." This by a Wing-Commander who led the first Tempest wing into action against the flying bomb and himself shot down 23.

Squadron-Leader J. Berry, of Carlton, Nottingham (his photograph appears below), said: "Our chief difficulty was that, though we could see the bombs much farther away at night, we could not easily judge how far away they were. All we could do at first was to fly alongside the fairly slow bombs and remember what they looked like at lethal range. In this way a very good interception system was worked out before the new shilling range-finder was issued."

That shilling rangefinder, which provided "the complete answer" to pilots' difficulties, was the invention of Sir Thomas Merton, unpaid scientific adviser to the Ministry of Production. He told a Daily Mail reporter that 24 hours after he was first struck by the idea he had manufactured a prototype. In less than a week the manufacture of hundreds was in full swing. "The rangefinder must remain secret," he said, "as its possibilities in this war may not yet be exhausted. But I can say that it is very small and no heavier than a box of matches. It was one of those ideas that look so obvious afterwards."

NEW and resourceful tactics were evolved by our fighter pilots. One, who ran out of ammunition after destroying two doodle-bugs and wanted to tackle a third, brought his fighter alongside of it and slid his starboard wing-tip beneath the port wing of the bomb. A flick of the control column and the "diver," its delicate gyro mechanism thrown out of balance, spun to earth. The pilot reported this novel method of attack when he arrived back at base, the news spread, and soon other pilots were repeating the trick. It was not always easy; they were compelled sometimes to make two, three and even four attempts before the flame-erupting target crashed.

Another pilot discovered that the best position for an attack was slightly behind and to one side of the flying bomb, when it became possible to shoot off the jet or a wing. At times fighters would co-operate with ground defences to bring the missiles to destruction; several flying bombs were destroyed by heavy and even light A.A. fire after having been "flipped down" to a convenient height by an obliging fighter.

HEAVY A.A. guns, moved to suitable sites, were supported not on the usual 15 ft. of concrete but on improvised "mattresses" of railway lines and sleepers. For this purpose 35 miles of lines and 22,500 sleepers were collected from 20 different railway depots.

There were instances of pilots who deliberately "steered" flying bombs into balloon barrage concentrations. The greatest balloon barrage in the history of the R.A.F. was massed to support the defences; at the height of the menace nearly 2,000 balloons were brought from every part of Britain and concentrated into an area to the south-east of London. Altogether they destroyed 278 flying bombs out of those which escaped the outer defence rings of A.A. guns and fighters.

To step-up the production of balloons the Ministry of Aircraft Production demanded of one factory an all-out effort. "We were offered," said the managing director of the firm concerned, "the use of another factory and urged to discontinue making our dinghies and lifebelts, but we knew these things were also of vital importance, so decided to appeal to our workers. They put in such a spurt that we increased the production of balloons by a very considerable proportion without affecting our output of dinghies and other things. Young girls and women toiled to the limit of their endurance, inspired by the fact that they were helping to defeat the flying bomb." The youngest of those girls and women was 14 and the oldest 68!

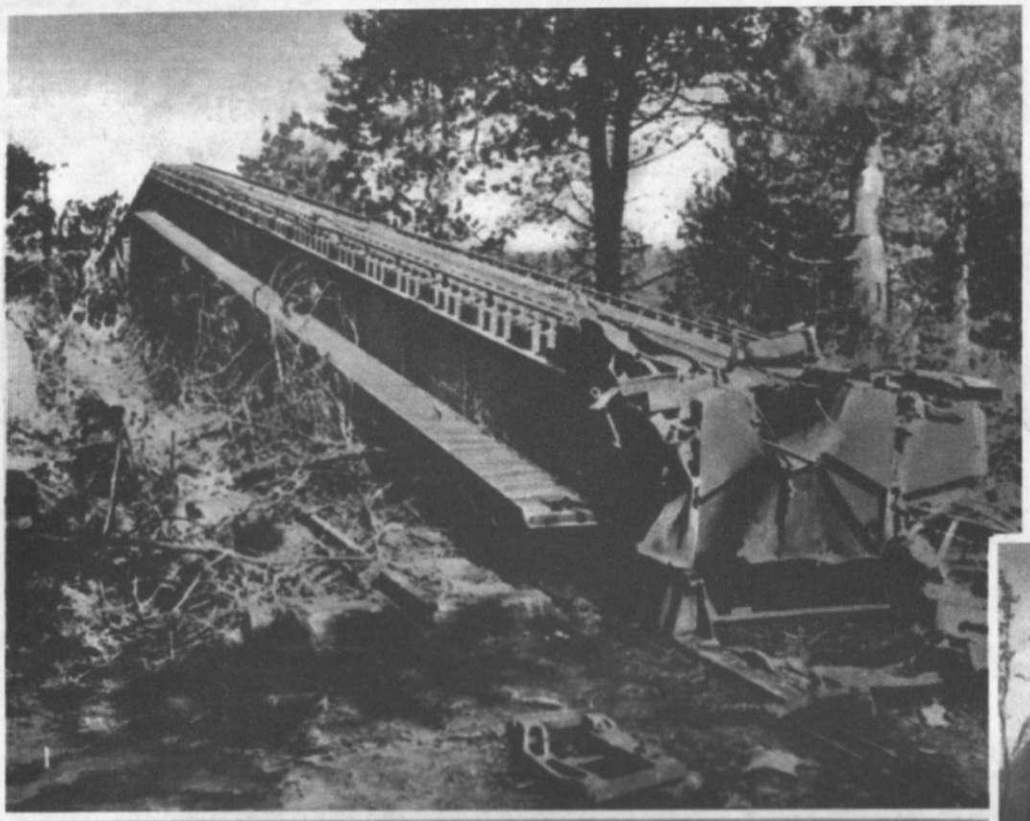
BALLOON sites were completed swiftly, and to link these with headquarters thousands of miles of telephone cable—much of it borrowed from Army formations on the spot to save time—was laid by G.P.O. engineers, assisted by men of the R.A.F. Signal Units and Royal Signals and manned by W.A.A.F. telephonists. The vigil of the crews who manned the sites was continuous.

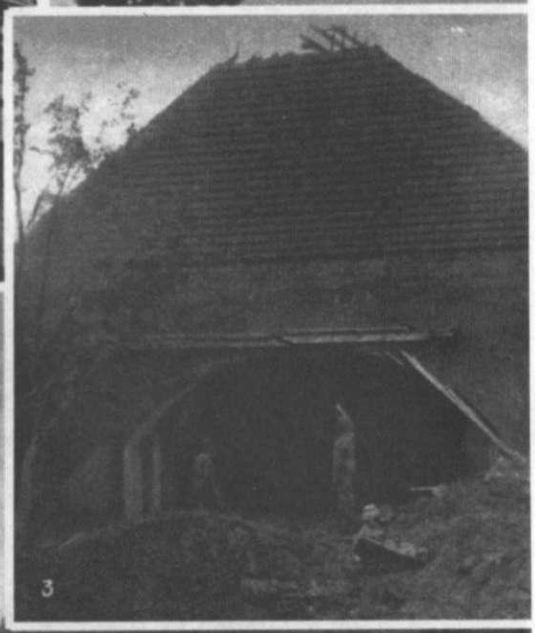
Thousands of W.A.A.F. personnel played their part in the flying bomb battle, as photographers, photographic interpretation officers, plotters, balloon fabric workers, cooks, and so on. A.T.S. girls also were well to the fore. And non-Service girls at London's telephone switchboards did a magnificent job in helping to keep the phones going during the attacks. Gas and water services were frequently interrupted—and as frequently put into operation again. The work of the various transport staffs was of the very highest order: 78 bus workers of the London Passenger Transport Board were killed and 1,410 injured.

Worst hit district of London was Croydon, with 75 per cent of its houses damaged. In a single day 8 bombs dropped there, and 15 in one week-end; 211 of its citizens were killed. Engaged in repairing London's damage, in August, were 1,500 naval ratings, each vigorously upholding the Royal Navy's tradition of "Jack of All Trades." These Servicemen were called in to ease the heavy burden suddenly thrust upon the heroic and ever-willing Civil Defence organization, every branch of which toiled unceasingly to save life and mitigate the hardships suffered by the "man-in-the-street." A first-hand description of such rescue work is given in page 347

**Sqdn.-Ldr. J. BERRY, D.F.C. and bar (below), top-scoring pilot in the battle against the flying bombs, of which he destroyed 60, all but three of them between sunset and dawn. His Tempest was damaged on several occasions by the explosions of his robot targets.** *Photo, Central Press*

**THE FAMOUS GUARDS CHAPEL, attached to Wellington Barracks, London, was hit by a flying bomb during a Sunday morning service in June 1944, and casualties were caused. Men (above) at work in the Chapel's shell.** *Photo, Planet News*

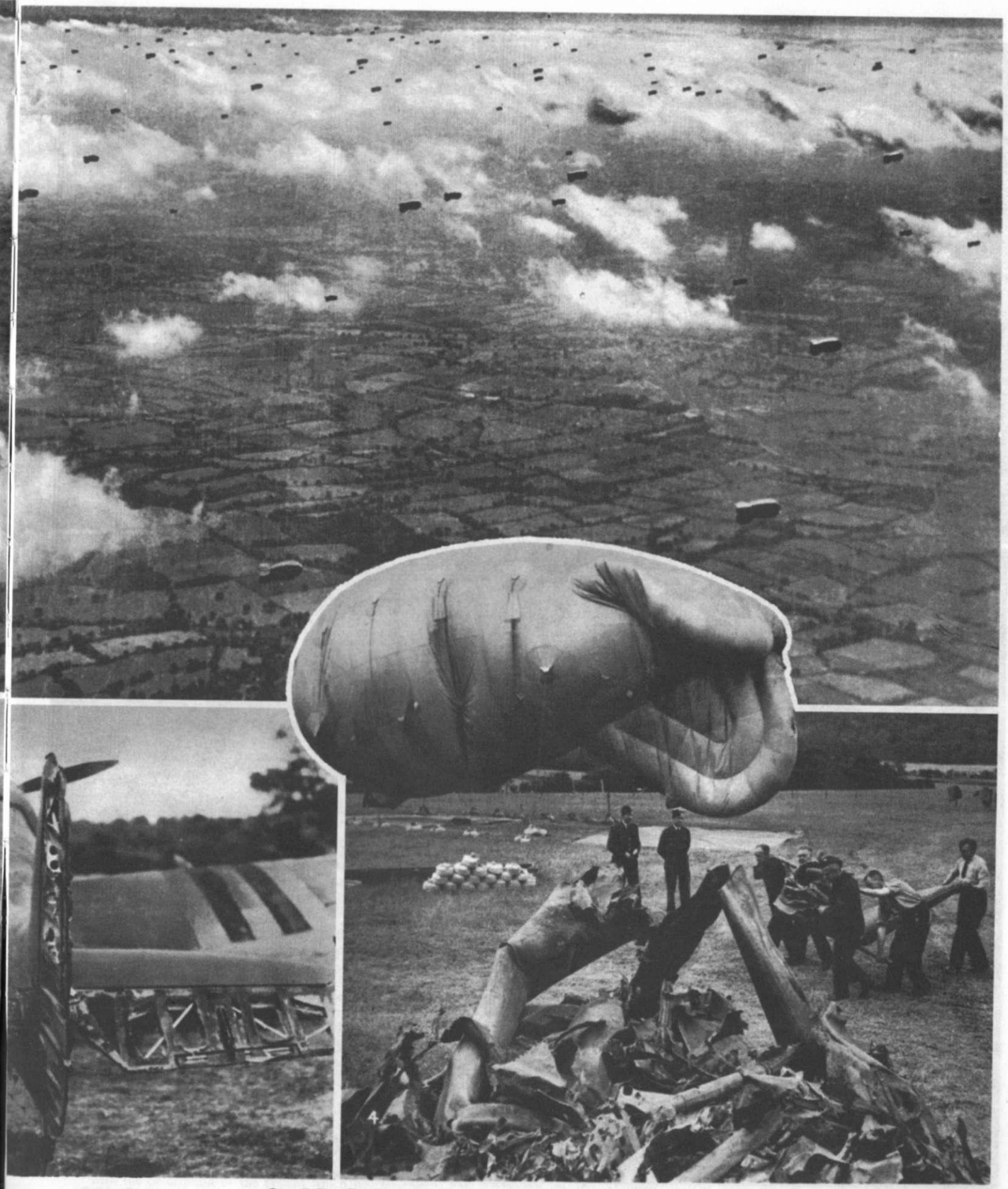




*Photos, British Official, Associated Press*

## When Hitler's V1 Left its Lair for England

Many flying-bomb launching sites were put out of action by the Germans themselves before they were captured : a disabled runway (1) found at Belloy-sur-Somme, near Amiens. "This indiscriminate weapon," as Mr. Churchill called it, was an unpleasant sight as it took the air (2). Sometimes it failed to function (4) and crashed near its launching site. Camouflage was employed to conceal flying-bomb depots from the R.A.F., some assembly houses having roofs resembling farm buildings (3).



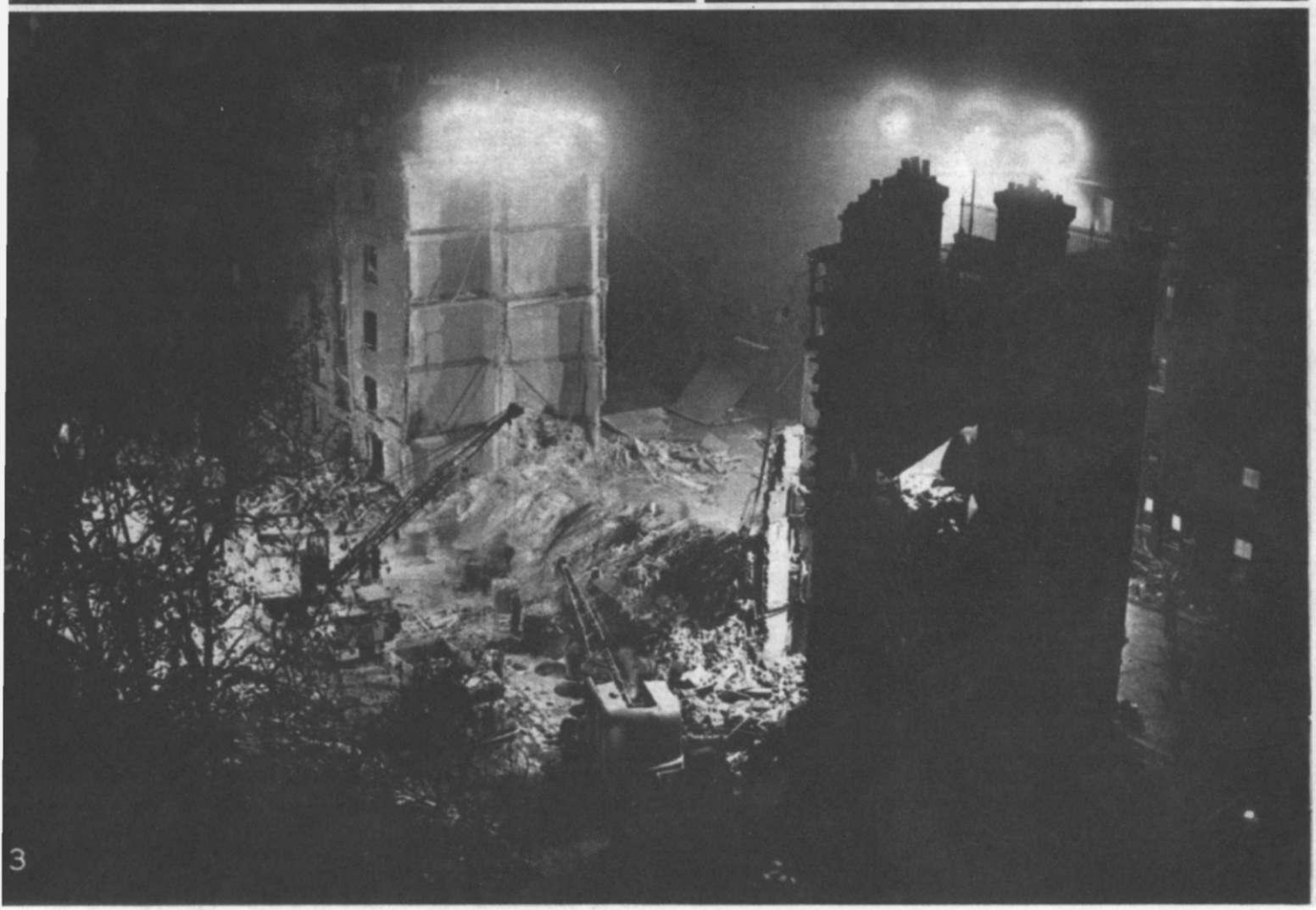
## Guns and Fighters Battled in Doodle-bug Alley—

In one day 97 out of 101 flying bombs were shot out of the sky. Sharing in the hard-won victory of this Second Battle of London, hundreds of coastal guns and fighter-planes were continually in action. Shell-bursts from an A.A. battery clustered thickly (1) as a flame-spouting bomb droned towards the capital. At a range of only 40 yards this R.A.F. pilot (2) destroyed his diving target; punctures in his Spitfire were caused by the bomb's mid-air disintegration.

*Photos, British Official, Planet News*

## —Cabled Balloons Formed Last Line of Defence

Of bombs which slipped through the first two lines of our triple defence and entered the balloon barrage area—the greatest concentration ever put into the air—nearly 15 per cent were brought down through collision with the cables; 278 were thus destroyed up to September 10, 1944. Here is a small section of the sky-barrage guarding towns of Southern England (3). From open fields surrounding the many sites the litter was daily collected and added to numerous scrap-heaps (4).



## London's Head was Bloody but Unbowed

*Photos, Associated Press, Daily Mirror, Daily Express*

Almost at the end of its final glide—motor cut out, impact and shattering explosion a matter of seconds only—a flying bomb (1) just missed the Law Courts in London. Frequenters of Fleet Street passed on almost unheeding as a pillar of smoke (background, 2) marked the crashing of a bomb in the Aldwych, almost the proverbial stone's-throw from them. Ripped apart in the dead of night, a block of flats sets heroic C.D. rescuers toiling with the aid of searchlights and cranes (3).

# VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

*by* Hamilton Fyfe

"JOIN the Navy and See the World" urged a pre-war poster. But during the past five years the men of the Army and Air Force have been quite as far afield as the sailors and marines. Never before has there been such an uprooting of men from their homelands on so vast a scale, never before such a planting of them down among far-off races, in lands that had hitherto been to them nothing more than unfamiliar names.

The soldiers of the ancient Roman Empire travelled as far to the west as Britain, as far south as the Sahara, as far east as the Black Sea. Those were short distances compared with what Allied troops have accomplished in this war. Soldiers and airmen from Britain have been almost all over the world. Canadians have fought in Sicily, Australians in the Western Desert and Egypt, South Africans in Somaliland, New Zealanders in Greece and Crete.

Those were only two of the countries where New Zealand forces have been sent, and it is very doubtful whether they ought to have been sent there. Mr. Walter Nash in his book, New Zealand, a Working Democracy (Dent, 8s. 6d.), defends the decisions of Mr. Churchill and the N.Z. Cabinet to send them and other troops for the sole purpose of "honouring the promise of assistance which the Greeks had been given." Mr. Nash admits "there was little expectation that the Germans could be held," but he argues that "a pledge had to be honoured, however costly it might be."

That seems to me altogether wrong. In war a promise of help is given in certain circumstances. If those circumstances alter so as to make it plain that assistance cannot be of any value, then it is mere Quixotism to keep the promise. It means throwing away many lives and much material without in any way benefiting those to whom the promise was made. That "the successful evacuation of Allied forces from Greece and subsequently from Crete was a magnificent achievement which will most assuredly find an honoured place in the annals of British naval history" is true; but the question whether the Navy ought to have been called on to achieve it will be debated as long as military history is written.

WHAT is certain is that the New Zealanders fought bravely and skilfully in the Near East, as they have done wherever they went. They are usually self-reliant and at the same time unusually good at working together and with other units.

> Long hard years of pioneering in a virgin country brought home very forcibly to New Zealanders the necessity of self-help. They learned this lesson well and have not forgotten it. In the desert sands of Libya, in the skies over German cities, and on cruisers and carriers in the southern seas these traits of individual initiative and responsibility are a characteristic of thousands upon thousands of young New Zealand men.
>
> They learned, too, that the individual can only thrive if all join in helping one another. Thus there emerged side by side with a deep faith in the value of individual freedom an equally firm belief in the value of collective organization for the individual as well as for the nation.

A large part of Mr. Nash's book is filled with the description of the system which he calls "a working democracy." That is undeniably correct, and Mr. Nash is the right person to tell us about it, for he was one of the Ministers chiefly concerned in its creation. Behind that effort, which gave such excellent results, was "the recognition that the community as a whole through its organized government must be collectively responsible for the welfare of its members." But along with this went "emphasis on individual rights and freedom"; there was no attempt to force people to alter their ways and their outlook. Thus the capable and honest men who laid the foundations of the new system were able to make "necessary political and economic adjustments smoothly," teaching the rest of the nations, ourselves included, a most useful lesson and "offering a practicable example of the kind of social organization—the kind of laws and institutions—that may well become typical of most democracies tomorrow."

"Practical"—that is the key-word. Changes were made "as the need for them arose." No doctrine, no theory, no so-called philosophy was allowed to dominate action. Reforms were carried out, not "according to plan"; that is, not as part of any preconceived transformation of society, but "as the need arose." If New Zealanders have any philosophy, which most of them would emphatically deny, regarding philosophers as a bunch of "long-hairs" with cranky notions, their philosophy is a conviction that "the best and fullest possibilities in life for themselves and their children" can be attained by the use of "common sense, combined with a realistic approach towards most problems and a strong humanitarian instinct."

## Pattern of Life in New Zealand

FOR seven years what is known as a Labour Government has been in power. It is in fact representative not merely of one side in politics but of the nation in bulk. Its basic principles are (1) the care of the old "because they have worked to make it possible for us to enjoy the standards we enjoy today" (that would not be true in all countries, would it?); (2) that those who render useful services are entitled to the full fruits of their labour; (3) that "resources must be so organized as to ensure the maximum production of useful goods and services, and that these shall be available to those who render useful service, if they are able, so that all may enjoy good standards of life, with security and leisure"; (4) that collective planning is necessary "both to make the best of our resources and to ensure that human needs are satisfied to the utmost."

Already, says Mr. Nash, the New Zealand worker can be fully employed at standard rates of wages. "He is guaranteed security against the hazards of ill-health, old age and invalidity. All children have equal educational opportunities from the kindergarten to the university. Every family can have a home and a home life with all that those terms imply." From this we can understand why the New Zealander, whether in the forces or working at home, feels a special personal interest in winning the war. If Japan had succeeded in her criminal endeavour to rule and enslave all the Pacific nations, the New Zealand system would have been turned into one of forced labour without liberty of any kind, for the advantage of a degenerate ruling race.

**MR. WALTER NASH, whose book is reviewed in this page, was born in England in 1882. New Zealand's Minister of Social Security from 1938-41, he was appointed Minister to America in 1942.** *Photo, Topical Press*

The Japanese plot has failed—so far, but Mr. Nash warns us against supposing that it will be a simple matter to dispose of Enemy Number Two when once Hitler, Enemy Number One, has been crushed in Europe. He believes Japan will fight to the bitter end and be "an even more determined foe when her cause is an utterly hopeless one than she has proved to be when everything was going in her favour." That does not accord with my reading of the character of the men who direct Japanese policy. Judging by what has happened in the past, I should say they will try to get out as soon as they see their defeat is certain. That Japan can continue to exist as an independent power much longer seems to me most unlikely. The four hundred millions of Chinese are bound to overwhelm the one hundred million Japs, and the two countries will then be amalgamated under Republican government. It is not improbable that this government might join the Federation of Socialist Soviet Republics, of which Russia is at present the largest unit.

WHETHER this would make for peace or for other wars no one can say. Certainly both Russia and China will be members of whatever international body is formed to take the place of the League of Nations, and will have great influence on its activity. Mr. Nash is of the same opinion as Mr. Churchill about the old League. It could have prevented war "if its machinery had been applied in its full vigour." Because Baldwin was too King Log-ish and Neville Chamberlain too King Stork-ish in the interest of Big Business and High Finance, the League languished. Nobody believed in it. If the warnings in a memorandum drawn up by the New Zealand Government and sent to the League in 1936 had been attended to, war could have been avoided.

For the immense quantities of food we have received from New Zealand, for the reverse Lease-Lend aid which the Dominion has given to the United States, for the instant response its people made to the Call to Arms, we owe debts of gratitude that must not be forgotten. We may also in the near future be indebted to them for the pattern of a State that can be described with accuracy as "a working democracy," not less efficient in peace than it is in war.

# Desert Battle to Save World's Food Supplies

**A special British military force, numbering 1,000 officers and men, is fighting on a vast front to free the world of countless appallingly destructive pests now threatening millions of pounds' worth of vital crops. How this strange war, directed from the London headquarters of the Anti-Locust Research Centre, is being waged is told by Captain MARTIN THORNHILL, M.C., F.R.G.S.**

EVERY twelve years invasion by huge hordes of locusts, which have on occasion threatened the economic security of nearly half the world, reaches its most dangerous peak. The year 1944 is one such critical period, and it is feared that it may be the worst on record. "Hoppers," estimated to be mobilizing in unprecedented strength, are accordingly being systematically attacked in their Arabian breeding grounds. The most determined onslaught ever made against the world's worst menace to food supplies, its object is to prevent the giant grasshoppers from sweeping across the desert and stripping the Middle East of the crops now vital to stricken Europe.

The British expedition in Arabia is part of an international campaign, stretching from Russia, through Syria, Palestine, 'Iraq, Persia, Egypt, the Sudan and Ethiopia, to beyond Uganda and Kenya. So interested is the world in the enterprise that the United States, Russia and India are helping substantially with funds and equipment. Supreme scientific direction comes from the Anti-Locust Research Centre in London, under Dr. Uvarov, the world's greatest living locust expert. Conferences on locust-control held in Cairo and Nairobi in 1943 were attended by experts from many States.

IMAGINE your home county swept clear of vegetation in a few hours and you have some idea of the problem confronting this new great organized 12-months' offensive against an almost incredibly destructive foe. When this war put a stop to it, science had all but won a fight which has been going on for centuries and from which the enemy has always emerged victorious—and small wonder, for a single flight of locusts over the Red Sea is estimated to spread over an area of at least 2,000 square miles. Settling, they strip vast territories, in very short time, of every vestige of vegetation. Taking flight again, they settle in pastures new. When the season's ravage is over enormous tracts lie devastated, barren for twelve months.

One memorable swarm, providentially blown into the sea during a storm, was cast up on the South African coast, the massed bodies of the monster insects forming a 4-ft. high bank five miles long. In one year 56,000 million were captured in specially dug pits, and then slaughtered, in Cyprus alone: there, 300 tons of locust eggs have been destroyed in a single season.

Egypt, annually ravaged since Biblical days, had its worst invasion of all time in 1915. Here, too, there were defence measures—of a kind. Enormous trenches trapped 7,866 million of the pests, weighing 13,500 tons. This catch was not for the whole season, but during a single phase of it. Individual farmers have original methods of frustrating the common enemy. I have seen Arab smallholders spread the smooth pages of large illustrated magazines before their plots in the path of creeping hordes of hoppers grounded for feeding; unable to climb the glossy sheets, the marauders bypassed the plots while their owners genuflected in thanks to Allah.

As the years pass, more up to date and efficacious methods have been used against the invaders. Shortly before the Eighth Army knew the Qattara Depression, a 50 by 125-mile swarm which threatened that and the surrounding area was diverted into the desert by an army of 2,000 men with flame-throwers, while aircraft sprayed the swarming sands with poison dust. It was shortly afterwards—in the spring of 1942—that the first large-scale offensive was launched against locusts in an effort to save Allied shipping by preserving from ravage the summer's food crops grown in the African colonies to supply the North African and Middle East armies. Entomologists had reported new remote trans-Arabian breeding grounds, and huge consignments of poisoned bran were shipped to those areas, and the "nurseries" extensively treated during the locusts' wingless stage.

That campaign was financed by the British Government, Russia, India, Africa and Middle Eastern Powers co-operating. In the present offensive the Soviet are one of the most ardent collaborators. The subject of Russian alliance with the Middle East Anti-Locust Union may well have been on the agenda of the Teheran Conference. India and Persia are close neighbours of the Soviet Union, and well-equipped Russian aircraft, with their own mechanics and ground staff, are now helping materially to overcome the locust threat to India's foodstuffs. Flying Officer Beer, of Birmingham, who has flown with the Russians on several anti-locust spray swoops, pays high tribute to the efficiency of the Red Air Force pilots. "For their job," he says, "they often come down to within 15 feet of the ground—a task needing considerable skill and nerve."

**COMBATING THE LOCUST MENACE in India, Russian airmen consult with Indian locust specialists. They are here seen plotting on a map the positions of swarms from reports sent in by British and Indian troops who act as observers on the pests' flying routes. As told in this page, Russia has often helped to overcome the threat to India's crops.** *Photo, Indian Official*

UNTIL recently it was thought there were two types of locust, the individual and the swarming. It has now been found that there is one only, and that swarming is caused by local conditions. This migratory species closely resembles, but is much larger than, the English grasshopper. It deposits its eggs in the sand, and the young hoppers hatch out in 4-6 weeks. Far from being dangerous only at the flying stage the locust is destructive at every turn of its career—larva, flightless "hopper" stage and adult. During the second stage of their evolution, lasting another 4-6 weeks, the hoppers move along in vast swarms several miles wide, laying waste all the ground they traverse. It is during this period that the treated bran is laid in their path. They eat it for the water that is mixed with it.

Thus it is essential to wipe out locusts during breeding, and first reports of the success of modern methods come from East Africa. There, one anti-locust unit alone laid down 8,045 bags of bait, 10 tons of molasses saturated with the new poison compound D.N.O.C., destroying 526 separate hopper and flying swarms.

Starting from the Turkana district in N.W. Kenya, the swarms threatened to destroy thousands of tons of food crops in the East African territories. "The infestation can only be described as terrific," stated an East Africa Command communiqué, "but vast areas of hoppers were completely wiped out." More than 7,000 square miles of territory, largely desert country with no water or road communications, was quartered by 200 motor vehicles, including ambulances, mobile workshops and water tankers. The personnel which made up this desert army included 60 British officers and N.C.O.s, 2,000 African troops, 2,000 Turkana tribesmen, and seven civilian experts.

THE Force that has now been swallowed up by the Arabian Desert is still more exceptional. The men belong to the R.A.S.C., Signals, R.A.M.C., and Army Catering Corps, and all have served at least two years in the Western Desert. There are two distinct parties. Both, with their technical experts, started from Egypt. One, a 250-vehicle convoy, under Major Pickavance of Liverpool, travelled through Palestine, Syria and 'Iraq to the head of the Persian Gulf and then down the tracks of Saudi Arabia. The second, commanded by Major William Horsfall of Wetherby, Yorks, crossed the Sinai desert to 'Aqaba, and then down the west coast of Arabia. At the head are special navigation cars to pilot the columns of locust hunters through the roadless wilderness of 3,000 miles.

From the Army Welfare Department the expedition received half a million cigarettes, footballs, boxing gloves, darts, indoor games, books, gramophones and records. The only link between the locust hunters in a land seldom penetrated by white men, and the outside world, is by radio reception from the B.B.C. To make local purchases the officer in charge of catering carries bags of gold sovereigns, every one bearing a king's head, since Arabs, regarding women as the inferior sex, part with less goods for queen's-head coins!

# First Dutch Town Entered by British Ground Troops

**VALKENSWAARD, the first town in Holland to be entered by British ground troops on their way to Eindhoven, was liberated by the British Second Army on September 17, 1944. This photograph shows British armour in the centre of the town, where tanks and other vehicles were temporarily stationed in the cobbled streets. Situated close to the Dutch-Belgian frontier, Valkenswaard represented an important capture for General Sir Miles Dempsey's forces which subsequently drove on through Eindhoven to Nijmegen.**



*Photo, British Newspaper Poo.*

# 'Seven-League Boots' are Winning Pacific War

**Air and sea power, combined in a new strategical pattern and backed by modern mechanical devices on land, have given the fabled "seven-league boots" to Allied forces in the Pacific. The once-derided technique of "island hopping" has indeed produced most spectacular results in this theatre of war, as explained by DONALD COWIE.**

ROOSEVELT once said that if MacArthur conquered an island a month it would take him 100 years to reach Tokyo. The President was expressing, back in the gloomiest days of the Pacific war, the popular revulsion against what the Americans derisively called the "island-hopping" strategy of MacArthur. Why the somersault since? Why, that is, do we now consider the end of the Japanese fight to be not so distant after all, and acknowledge that "island-hopping" has indeed done the trick?

The answer to these questions contains one of the most remarkable strategic discoveries of modern warfare. It is that seven-league boots have been given to the island-hoppers by the development of carrier-borne aircraft so that they can by-pass hundreds of miles of occupied islands at will and, landing far in their rear, remove those garrisons from the war without firing a shot against them.

Consider what happened in the Marianas, those islands within bombing range of Japan which an American task force ripped from a vicious enemy in less than two months, between June 15 and August 10, 1944. To begin with, they should never have been attacked, by all the text-book rules, till the Americans had first conquered and absolutely reduced (1) all the Caroline Islands to the far south, (2) the island of Guam to the near south, and (3) Wake Island to the east. You don't besiege Paris before you have taken Caen, or Genoa before you have taken Naples. It is not done.

But that is precisely what the Americans did. Ignoring the "strongest Japanese base in the south-west Pacific," at mighty Truk in the Carolines, taking no more notice of heavily-fortified Guam and Wake Islands than if they had been held by impotent children, our Allies steamed stolidly ahead through the blue, hundreds of miles across open sea, and struck. By so striking, and taking the Japanese utterly by surprise, and securing suddenly a great base for themselves hundreds of miles in the rear of the defensive screen which their enemy had so carefully erected, the Americans accomplished in a month or so what might otherwise have taken them several years to win.

Even in the tactics of the assault on the Marianas they were gloriously unorthodox. Reading from south to north, first comes Guam, then Rota, then Tinian, and finally, nearest Japan, the strongest island of Saipan. Our Allies calmly sailed past Guam, Rota and Tinian, to attack Saipan alone. They could mop up the others afterwards, as they did.

Again by-passing the enemy stronghold at Truk, the next moves were made on September 15, 1944, when simultaneous landings took place on the Palau Islands, west of the Carolines, and on Morotai Island, 300 miles south-east of the Philippines. The Palau Islands were stormed by American Army and Marine forces; other Allied forces which landed on Morotai were under the command of General MacArthur, who himself took part. Thus two spearheads, 650 miles apart, pointed straight at Mindanao in the Philippines, and threatened to isolate the Japanese garrison of 200,000 in the East Indies.

So it has been almost from the beginning in the south-west Pacific, if the successive steps of General MacArthur's and Admiral Nimitz's forces be carefully analysed.

MacArthur jumped up the Solomons in a series of leaps, often leaving strong Japanese fortresses behind. To this day an enemy garrison still bristles, and starves, in the fetid jungles of Bougainville Island in the Solomons. After struggling forward in New Guinea for some months, MacArthur seemed to say "Oh, to hell with this!" and leapt right over the heads of the Japanese to attack northern bases, to land in New Britain. And then, having isolated strong Rabaul, he sped with those seven-league boots right across to the western or Dutch part of New Guinea, hundreds of miles away.

**BY-PASSING JAPANESE ISLAND STRONGHOLDS in the S.W. and Central Pacific, Allied forces in this vast theatre of war isolated enemy garrisons and wrenched from the Japanese vital bases hundreds of miles apart. Enemy defensive plans were violently disrupted as a result of the Americans' "island hopping" in the areas shown in this map.**

So we come to the crux of the matter. What *are* those interesting seven-league boots which similarly enabled Admiral Nimitz's naval forces to jump from the remote Gilbert Islands to Saipan near Japan in less than a year, losing only 6,000 men to the Japanese 55,000 in the same time? The "boots" are aircraft, used by men—and this is important—with a remarkable faculty for digging themselves in quickly.

FIRST our Allies produced planes adapted for the purpose, long-range bombers and fighters, troop-carriers, naval aircraft of many new types, and had them ready in record time. Then they built the ships, thousands of landing-craft, at least 22 big new aircraft-carriers. The bombers went out first, to smash Japanese air and naval ports, to sink enemy shipping. Next the big expeditions set sail or took to the air—and were protected throughout by such a hornet swarm of long-range and carrier-borne aircraft that the enemy was unable to interfere with them.

The enemy could not bomb them, because the American air umbrella was too strong; he could not attack them with his fleet, because American aircraft and submarines threatened to sink his precious ships wherever they so much as showed smoke on the horizon. He had only the one fleet, irreplaceable, and that must be kept for the final inshore defence of Japan.

So aircraft have enabled our Allies to disregard orthodoxy and, by continual by-passing, to advance in months over a Pacific distance which would otherwise have taken years. (No need to worry about the Japanese bases thus by-passed; isolated from home, they must rot.) Undoubtedly it has also been a very great naval occasion. Without the aircraft, however, those armadas of merchantmen, and landing-craft, and supply ships such as tankers, could never have thrust so far and so invulnerably. Their protecting warships would have had to fight great sea battles against the Japanese navy on equal conditions, or probably on unequal conditions. As it is, the aircraft alone have kept Japanese naval and air opposition completely at bay.

But there is one other factor in addition to the air weapon which has made this remarkable strategy possible—and it was referred to above when it was said that the men using the seven-league boots have a rare faculty for digging themselves in quickly.

ONCE it was necessary to capture enemy-held bases in order to have bases yourself. Bulldozer, roller and tractor in efficient American hands have altered all that. Why attack a heavily fortified base like Wewak in order to obtain landing facilities when troops can leap to Hollandia, over two hundred miles to the west, and create an equally good base there? An excellent alternative to taking Truk is to build a bigger and better Truk elsewhere, which is just what a clever army with new methods can do, almost overnight. One more text-book rule is out-dated!

Since the Japanese obviously based their Pacific defence on that ancient text-book, and since our American Allies have won their success up till now with sideshow forces, reserving the strongest for the European theatre, we can safely predict some startling Pacific developments tomorrow, when all is concentrated against the Far Eastern enemy. We ourselves may start some by-passing, possibly via Singapore up the Indo-China coast. The final big American hop might land them in the centre of Tokyo while we are still wondering how long it will all take

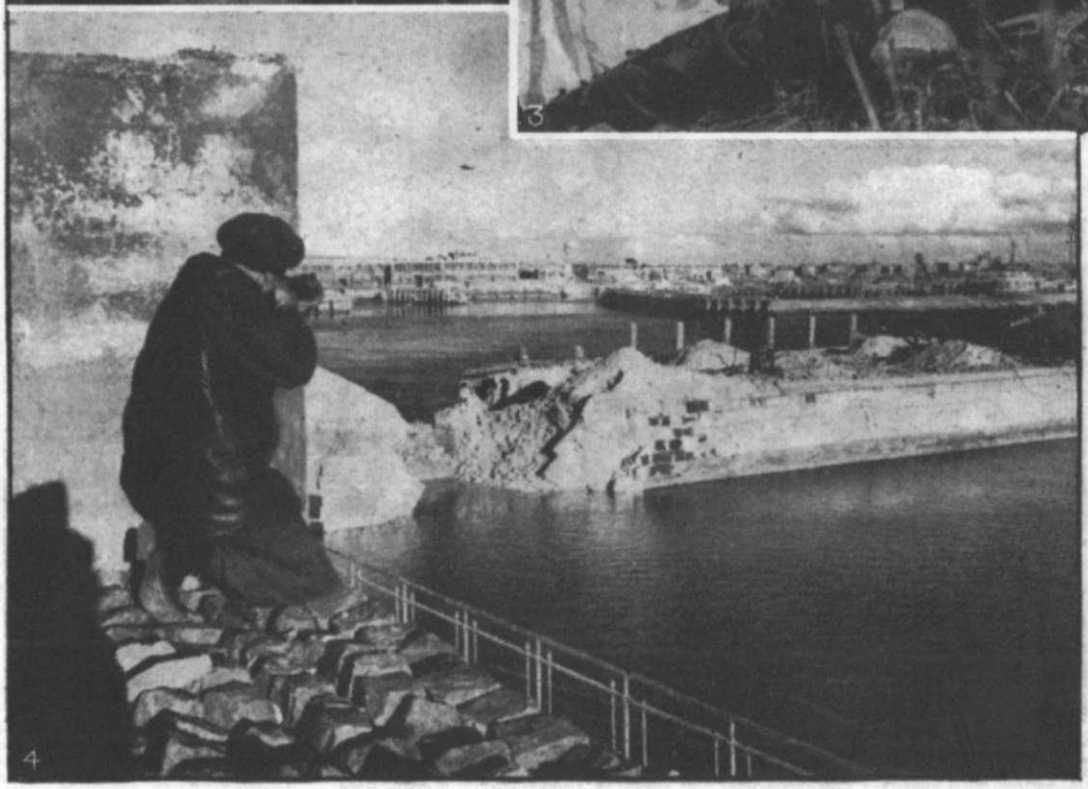
# Burma Border Outpost Cleared by 14th Army

**TAMU VILLAGE**, adjoining Kabaw Valley in Manipur State, was wrested from the Japanese in early August 1944 by the British 14th Army when the latter crossed the Burma border to clear the last of the enemy out of India. Buddhist temples were found damaged (1). American ambulance returns to Tamu with casualties (2). A knocked-out Japanese tank is taken in tow by British troops (3). Moth plane waits in a clearing to take-off with wounded (4). Corner of a Japanese graveyard near the captured village (5).



*Photos, British and Indian Official*

# How Belgium's White Army Aided Allied Advance



**1,000,000 STRONG, Belgium's "White Army"—whose insignia is a small white bird—played a great role during the period of German occupation. It carried on guerilla warfare, and aided the Allied advance into Belgium by guarding communication lines and clearing up pockets of resistance. After D-Day, supplies for this army were regularly dropped at night by British airmen; farm carts and lorries were used to collect the supplies here parachuted down for the first time in daylight (1).**

**Members of the White Army point derisively at a poster of Hitler decorating a window of their Liége H.Q. (2). Imprisoned for 18 months by the Nazis, Mlle. Moreau, a patriot nurse (3), bandaged a wounded British soldier during fighting in the Antwerp dock area. A man of the underground army (4) returns the shot of a German sniper in the ruined dock area of Ostend.**

*Photos, British Official; British Newspaper Pool, Associated Press, New York Times Photos*

# I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

## *Dutch Fields were Bright with our Parachutes*

**The sensational descent of the First Allied Airborne Army behind the German lines in the Netherlands on September 17, 1944, was yet another remarkable demonstration of our air supremacy. Michael Moynihan, News Chronicle war correspondent, flew in a Halifax glider-tower with the great armada and kept this diary of the momentous occasion.**

THIS was an army in flight. Flight, not in the German sense, for we were headed towards Holland. From horizon to horizon the sky was alive with Allied aircraft; Dakotas carrying para-troops, Halifaxes, Stirlings, great gliders weighted with men and material. One of the greatest airborne operations in history was under way. The Dutch coast appeared through the haze of the warm afternoon. To the men of the First Airborne Army it was the promised land. Within 45 minutes they would be in action on enemy-held soil. The full story of this great and historic operation cannot yet be told. My story is confined to one airfield among the many from which the airborne armada took off; and on that airfield the one plane.

M for Mike is the Halifax from which I witnessed this stupendous undertaking. Our job was to tow a Hamilcar, the world's biggest glider, right into Holland. Our freight consisted of two Bren-gun carriers, our "passengers" five North-Country men of the Airborne Army.

It was over a week ago that I came to this airfield in the West Country, but not until yesterday did "operations market" become a reality. At 11 in the morning the camp was sealed. Sentries guarded its boundaries. The bus service to the local town was cancelled. In all parts of the camp final preparations were made; troops assembled their equipment. Halifax crews went over their charts and maps for the last time with a thoroughness that could leave no room for mistakes.

### They Joked Before Action

At six o'clock this morning the sleeping camp was roused for its great day. Ground crews had been working all night on Halifaxes. The two long rows of Horsas and Hamilcars waited, the latter already filled with their equipment—carriers and guns. Beside the assembled force, glider and tug pilots were briefed. The Group Captain read a message from the A.O.C., wishing pilots and crews all luck in the great mission.

In the warm autumn morning of this fourth anniversary of the Battle of Britain, troops and crews stood beside the giant machines that were soon to take them into action. They joked over cups of tea flavoured with rum; chalked the names of girl friends on the sides of their gliders. At the end of the long column of aircraft, M for Mike waited beside a Hamilcar that bore the macabre inscription, "The undertaker and his stiffs."

WE were the 13th and last of the Hamilcar towers. Staff-Sgt. Hill and Sgt. Openshaw were pilot and co-pilot of the Hamilcar. At 10.50 we taxied to the long runway. At 10.53 we were airborne. This is the diary I kept of an historic flight.

11.45.—We are flying in a blue sky, cloudless except for aircraft, and what an exception! On our starboard side, front and behind, the armada stretches. M for Mike is not standing up well to the strain of the 15 tons dead weight behind. The other 12 Hamilcars have outdistanced us. The pilot and navigator decide to cut off a loop in our course to make up time. We are off now on our own. 2,000 ft. below people are coming out of country churches and staring up at us in wonder.

12.15.—Approaching the coast. Navigator says: "I have cut off as much as I can, but we are going to be hellishly late."

12.30.—Stirlings towing Horsas to port. Farther ahead aircraft are as thick as flights of swallows as far as the haze of the horizon.

1.0.—We have no chance now of catching the Hamilcars. Must risk a "lone wolf" approach perhaps 30 minutes late over our objective. To port a Horsa has broken adrift and goes down to the sea, a Stirling circling with obvious concern.

1.15.—We are over Holland. From the bomb-aimer's turret in the nose I see a flooded countryside, the water is still and looks like green slime from which rooftops, trees and telegraph poles protrude. First of the great fighter escort sighted—Mosquitoes hedge-hopping below us, Spitfires above.

1.20.—First signs of life below—groups of civilians staring up from country roads and village greens.

1.30.—Scores of Dakotas are passing to our starboard—on the way home. This is the Continent, but it seems to be "traffic on the left." None of the flak has been active.

1.35.—Three Horsas have made a forced landing. Dutch people are streaming across the fields from a village towards them.

1.50.—Dakotas coming up to port—reassuring to have their company. Flak has just come up from near our objective, like hammer blows on the floor of the plane. Flak bursts 50 yards to port.

1.55.—This is it. "O.K., boys. I'm casting off now," says the glider pilot. "Thanks for lift." They're away. Below, the fields north of the Rhine are cluttered with gliders. To port there is a wonderful spectacle as the Dakotas disgorge their troops. The sunlit area is bright with parachutes. In a village houses are on fire. The fighting seems to have moved west. Smoke rises from the woods and a large area of gorse is on fire. I see "the undertaker" touching down among the litter of gliders, a perfect landing. I can just see the nose swing back to let out the carriers. The parachutists are now down—their chutes scattered through the field like bright crushed apples.

2.0.—Headed for home. We have climbed above clouds and seem to be all alone in this remote mutable upper-world. For fighters or flak we have been all along and still are a sitting target. But the enemy appears to have been thoroughly stunned.

2.10.—Coffee is being passed round.

2.25.—By the flooded coast a ship shot up by Rocket Typhoon is blazing and sending up a huge cloud of black smoke.

2.30.—Over the coast. "O.K., boys. Back to Merrie England," says the navigator.

2.50.—A motor-boat is speeding below to the rescue of a detached Horsa.

3.30.—3,000 ft. over the Sunday quiet of England. On the Thames yachts and rowing-boats are gliding. "Oh, to be in Civvy Street!" sighs one of the crew.

4.20.—We are coming down. We are home!

**CROSSING A LOWER REACH OF THE RHINE, with the peaceful-looking Dutch countryside spread out below, these R.A.F. Halifaxes towing British Horsa gliders are nearing their destination. They formed a small part of the vast armada that carried the First Allied Airborne Army to Holland, as related in the story above.** **See also illus. p. 349.** *Photo, British Official*

**BOUND FOR HOLLAND** in a C.46 transport aircraft, these British parachute troops shared in the great adventure embarked upon by the First Allied Airborne Army on September 17, 1944 (see story in p. 345). By September 21, more troops had been landed in the area of Nijmegen—scene of fierce German resistance. *Photo, British Official*

## *I Saw the Maginot Line Come to Life Again*

**With hardly a shot having been fired, a stretch of the Maginot Line fell to U.S. 3rd Army troops on September 11, 1944. Cornelius Ryan, of The Daily Telegraph, found that the Germans had not demolished or mined any part of it; even the guns were still oiled and in working condition.**

I STOOD beside a French boy of 18 this morning in murky, damp darkness, 100 ft. below the level of the earth in the electrical power house, and watched him as by the light of a torch he pressed the starter button of the huge Diesel engine. With a low hissing a flywheel began to spin, and one by one red lights flickered on the control panels flanking each wall, lights flashed on in the damp ceiling and a deep whirring note resounded throughout the miles of tunnels.

Very much as the French had left it in 1940, the Maginot Line had come to life again. It had been "switched on" for our benefit. The whole of that vast power-house was as clean as a new pin, with everything in working order. There were shining Diesel engines, huge transformers, complete air-conditioning plant, lifts capable of hoisting 250 tons, and an electric railway. This particular fort, only one of a hundred which dot the countryside, had for its occupying force during the four years of occupation only one German. All its complicated machinery has been cared for by three Frenchmen and this boy, and the Germans had paid them 5f. 40c., or about 6d. an hour to do it.

For nearly three hours I was shown over the whole fort by this youth. The main entrance is concealed in a dense forest near the little village of Crusnes. Driving through this forest we came to a squat, black, concrete fort which contained the main entrance. It was about 30 ft. high and about 80 ft. wide. In its centre stood two iron gates wide open. Anybody could have entered.

Just inside the entrance was a pit right across a tunnel, about 14 ft. wide and 12 ft. in depth. To cross, one had to walk over the iron rungs of a ladder. The walls on each side of the tunnel were lined with a heavy electrical cable, and down the centre ran twin railway lines. On one set stood a small electric engine, which received its power from overhead cables.

We reached the lift and began the long walk downstairs, which followed it spiral fashion down to the very depths of the earth. Reaching the bottom we walked perhaps a mile to the power-house, where the young Frenchman busied himself with the giant Diesel engine and then threw the starter which brought it to life. We continued the tour aboard an electric train, which nosed along tunnels, past the men's quarters, magazines, storehouses and gun emplacements commanding each tunnel.

At the end of one such tunnel we stopped at a solid one-foot thick steel door weighing 10 tons, which divided the fortifications and could be used as a means of defence or as a fire-door. Then the little train began the long climb to one of the main overground forts. We left the train and walked the remaining distance, passing hand-operated shell hoists, to the interior of a cupola.

In the centre, rising high into the darkness, ran a mass of machinery, which was the main base of the guns on the top, pointing outwards from the overhead fort. On each side of this machinery were two automatic shell lifts, much the same as on battle-cruisers. Here also was mechanism to turn the whole turret. Once again we boarded the electric train and journeyed along another tunnel to one of the observation points. This was another cupola, but instead of guns it had four wind slits about a quarter of an inch in depth.

**IN THE MAGINOT LINE,** in the Thionville sector, units of the French Forces of the Interior man a light machine-gun. A visit to the Line is described above. *Photo, Keystone*

## *We Salute the Men Who Tunnel Through Death!*

**Civil Defence Rescue men have earned the admiration of the whole civilized world. Preston Benson of The Star tells the inside story of their activities in the debris of a London building shattered by one of the 8,070 flying bombs launched by the Germans against Southern England up to September 4, 1944.**

I WAS allowed to worm my way through the choking brick and mortar dust and the smell of gas, to scramble over masses of girders and jagged masonry, past the stout lorries and the three 7-ton mobile cranes which lifted great baskets of debris into the lorries to get it away.

Around me in the shadow of a vast gash in a block of flats that had collapsed on itself on being struck by a flying bomb were the Rescue men, stripped to the waist, the sweat wriggling down through the thick coating of dust on their sun-browned bodies. They were the Civil Defence Rescue units. Alongside them were specially-trained Rescue men from the Army, who had been called in. They were working tremendously, these men. I never saw men work so hard or intensely, except, perhaps, once in 1940, when I went to a Midlands iron foundry and half-naked men there laboured at the furnaces as if the entire war turned on them. Here men were saving life. Five people were still believed to be trapped.

The "incident"—a quaint word to describe a big bomb disaster on the edge of inner London—had occurred shortly after daybreak. Seven had been taken out alive, one dead. It was now late afternoon. "Five more," said a man with a notebook in his hand. "We shall want the lights tonight, by the look of it." An officer took that up to be sure that the batteries of 300-watt flood lamps would be there. "Can't leave anything to chance," he remarked, "though there was a time when the public threatened us when we had dimmed headlights on a job like this."

It was living debris, an immense pile of it, dangerous stuff that would move if a wrong bit was extracted. Walls weighing scores of tons overhung the job. One looked tottery to me. "A tie-rod's keeping that up," I was told by a man with four-year stripes. "We'll have to risk it. We'd like to shore it up. Can't do it. Not time. We're cutting through here."

"How d'you know there's somebody in there?" I asked.

"Information. You start these jobs by asking a lot of questions. It saves time. Ask wardens, anybody . . . But just a minute, old man. Shut up a bit."

Everything went dead silent. Shovellers, lorry men, everyone. Motors shut off. Men held their hands up at their shoulders, spreading out their fingers and shaking them for silence. Everyone held their breath, listening hard. One man bent down, putting his ear at the end of a pipe sticking out of the debris. A sweating labourer wagged a forefinger at a distant point of the debris. Was it a groan? I could not tell. Some slight movement of wood? "Tunneller, perhaps," my guide whispered. But nothing sure.

Then at it again . . . Round the other side at the entrance of the tunnel, scarcely enough to take a man, I thought, an armoured tube ran in. "He's in there with a mask on. Remote respiration control. Sounds as if he's sawing. That bloke'll get through anything."

I'd soon seen enough. You cannot watch this kind of thing for long, as you would gaze at a peacetime fire. "If I stop here I'll be wanting to help," I said, excusing myself. "Okay, mate," said my guide. "The public always feel like that. But except for clearing bits away you'd be in the way. I remember soldiers from a barracks who came to help. They worked like mad at loose roof timbers, attacked brickwork with crowbars, and piled the stuff on our chaps tunnelling into the basement. Skilled job this. Not for amateurs."

As we walked aside he told me. "You have to have expert knowledge of buildings and be trained," he said. "Tunnelling's almost an art. You might get in there and find yourself in a wardrobe. Knock the ends out and move it along with you, bit by bit, as a shield. Or go through a wall. I've known that. You've to know what you dare take out, what you must leave. All the time looking for a void.

"That's where they often are. Down comes a beam or the joists, leaving a trapped person in a triangular space. A void. You're trained for it in great dumps of debris, with live persons deliberately imprisoned underneath. They volunteer for it and get into the dump through a back door. Or are pinioned down and the stuff piled on. It's just like the real thing. You go in,

**FLYING BOMB VICTIM, dug out from the wreckage of his home by heroic Civil Defence rescuers, receives first-aid attention. Scenes such as this became commonplace in London and Southern England in the summer of 1944.**
*Photo, Fox*

tunnelling. Making frames as you go along. Why, we've even had competitions at it."

They are trained, too, to get people down from high floors; to convey casualties by human chain along tunnels; to make the essential preliminary reconnaissances by which a few minutes' delay saves hours. "Once knew a chap," said my guide, "who worked a kitchen table along as a frame and got people out. Last thing you do is to start taking stuff from the top. Start at the lowest possible level and work into it. Or run a cutting through and then tunnel sideways. Tunnel upwards, too."

"What would you do if you met a gas-stove?" I asked.

"Go round it. Or through it! Metal bedstead's one of the worst things. Generally got to be cut. You can sometimes use a short-handled miner's pick in a tunnel or a New Zealand lumber jack. We have all the tools precisely arranged in a van, so that we can pick them out in the dark. We're really specialists, of course. Carpenters, plumbers, fitters, riggers, steel erectors, timber men, mattock men—from the building trades. Got a lot of teams in London from the country. They're keen, I tell you."

"What was your worst job?"

"Oh, I dunno. We once reached a woman sitting on a chair. She was pinned down at her head and we had to get the chair down to get her out. Cut its legs off to lower her. Then four fellows made a human chain to carry her out. One of my mates once reached a kid. Right in. 'Hello!' said the kid. 'Hello!' he said, 'You all right?' 'Yes,' said the kid, 'but I'm frightened.' Been in there two hours. Crawled out and got up and limped to the ambulance. Didn't want carrying. Only about ten, too. One of our fellows got a tunnel under a three-storey job and found a casualty pinned down. He had to amputate an arm under the direction of a doctor administering anaesthetic."

Two things he impressed upon me. "Tell people," he said, "that if they see some of our fellows walking up and down smoking fags and taking it easy, they're probably gassed and are being walked about to recover. And tell 'em to let their wardens know where their Morrisons are in the house and when they go away—even for a week-end. That'll save us risking our lives! Scores of us on this job in London have been killed. Hundreds seriously injured too." Somehow, I thought, there ought to be a Salute for Rescue. But my man was already back on his job. "Think we might get the N.F.S. floods here tonight, sir?" he was asking his officer.

# OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

***SEPTEMBER 13, Wednesday*** *1,838th day*

**Western Front.**—Neufchateau, S.W. of Nancy, captured by 3rd Army. French troops of 3rd and 7th Armies linked up at Chatillon-sur-Seine.

**Air.**—Heavy attack by U.S. bombers on oil plants and aircraft factories in Germany, following night attacks by R.A.F. on Frankfort and Stuttgart. R.A.F. bombed Osnabruck by daylight.

**Mediterranean.**—Allied bombers attacked Oderthal and other oil plants in Poland and Silesia.

**Russian Front.**—Soviet troops captured Lomza, on R. Narew, near E. Prussia. Russian bombers attacked Budapest.

**General.**—Terms of armistice between Rumania and United Nations announced.

***SEPTEMBER 14, Thursday*** *1,839th day*

**Western Front.**—Allied troops in Belgium reached Leopold Canal. Dutch and U.S. forces freed Maastricht in Holland.

**Russian Front.**—Praga, suburb of Warsaw east of Vistula, captured by Soviet and Polish troops.

**Baltic.**—Germans attempting to land on island of Hogland repulsed by Finns.

**Pacific.**—Announced that 501 Japanese aircraft and 173 ships were destroyed in three days' air attacks on Philippines.

**Home Front.**—Continuous shelling of south-east coast area by German cross-Channel guns.

***SEPTEMBER 15, Friday*** *1,840th day*

**Western Front.**—U.S. troops broke through main Siegfried Line east of Aachen. Nancy liberated by F.F.I. and U.S. troops.

**Air.**—Kiel again attacked in force by R.A.F. at night. Lubeck and Berlin also bombed. Lancasters attacked German battleship Tirpitz off Norway with 12,000-lb. bombs.

**Mediterranean.**—Allied bombers attacked Athens airfields.

**Pacific.**—Allied forces landed on Peleliu, Palau Is., and on Morotai, N. of Halmahera.

***SEPTEMBER 16, Saturday*** *1,841st day*

**Western Front.**—Allies fighting in outskirts of Aachen. Modane, at western end of Mont Cenis tunnel, captured.

**Air.**—R.A.F. heavily bombed airfields in Holland and Germany at night.

**Russian Front.**—Soviet troops entered Sofia, capital of Bulgaria.

***SEPTEMBER 17, Sunday*** *1,842nd day*

**Western Front.**—1st Allied Airborne Army landed in Holland at Eindhoven, Nijmegen and Arnhem.

**Russian Front.**—Soviet Latvian offensive opened south-east of Riga.

**Pacific.**—Allied troops again landed in Palau group, on Angaur island.

**Balkans.**—Announced that Yugoslav Army of Liberation had freed central Dalmatian Islands.

***SEPTEMBER 18, Monday*** *1,843rd day*

**Western Front.**—Advanced armour of British 2nd Army made contact with airborne units in Holland.

**Air.**—Allied aircraft again bombed gun positions in Holland. At night R.A.F. made heavy attack on Bremerhaven.

**Russian Front.**—Soviet armies launched double offensive in Estonia.

**Poland.**—Large force of Allied bombers flew supplies to Warsaw and landed at Russian bases.

**Pacific.**—Allied Eastern Fleet and carrier-aircraft attacked rail centre at Sigli, Sumatra.

***SEPTEMBER 19, Tuesday*** *1,844th day*

**Western Front.**—Eindhoven in Allied hands. Resistance ceased at Brest.

**Air.**—U.S. bombers attacked railway and supply targets east of the Rhine. At night R.A.F. bombed Rheydt and Munchen-Gladbach.

**General.**—Armistice between Finland and United Nations signed in Moscow.

***SEPTEMBER 20, Wednesday*** *1,845th day*

**Western Front.**—Allied land and air forces linked up in Nijmegen area. Poles reached Scheldt on six-mile front.

**Russian Front.**—Soviet aircraft bombed Debrecen (Hungary) and Csop (Ruthenia).

**Pacific.**—First attacks by Allied carrier-aircraft on shipping and airfields in Manila area of Philippines.

***SEPTEMBER 21, Thursday*** *1,846th day*

**Western Front.**—Nijmegen cleared of the enemy. British 2nd Army infantry advanced towards Arnhem.

**Air.**—U.S. bombers attacked oil plant at Ludwigshafen, and rail yards at Mainz and Coblenz.

**Italy.**—Greek and Canadian troops of 8th Army captured Rimini.

**Pacific.**—Another heavy attack by U.S. carrier-aircraft on Manila shipping and airfields; 40 ships sunk and 357 aircraft destroyed in two days.

***SEPTEMBER 22, Friday*** *1,847th day*

**Western Front.**—British 2nd Army continued to advance towards Arnhem despite enemy flank attacks. All organized resistance ceased in Boulogne. Allied troops captured Stolberg, E. of Aachen.

**Russian Front.**—Soviet troops stormed Tallinn, capital of Estonia.

**Poland.**—Units of Polish Home Army in Warsaw established contact with advanced Soviet units on west bank of Vistula.

***SEPTEMBER 23, Saturday*** *1,848th day*

**Western Front.**—Allied supply-corridor north of Eindhoven cut by enemy; some reinforcements crossed Rhine at Arnhem.

**Air.**—Gun emplacements on island of Walcheren bombed by Allied aircraft. At night R.A.F. made heavy attacks on Neuss, N.E. of Aachen, Munster and Bochum.

**Russian Front.**—Soviet troops occupied Estonian port of Pernau.

**General.**—Announced that all Swedish Baltic ports to be closed to foreign shipping from September 27.

***SEPTEMBER 24, Sunday*** *1,849th day*

**Western Front.**—Further attempts to reinforce Allied airborne troops on north bank of Rhine at Arnhem.

**Russian Front.**—Units of Soviet Baltic Fleet captured port of Baltiski, Estonia.

***SEPTEMBER 25, Monday*** *1,850th day*

**Western Front.**—British airborne troops at Arnhem withdrawn south across the Rhine at night.

**Air.**—More than 1,200 U.S. bombers attacked rail yards and oil plants behind Siegfried Line.

**Russian Front.**—In Estonia Soviet troops captured port of Haapsalu.

**Balkans.**—Cetinje, capital of Montenegro, captured by Yugoslav Army.

**General.**—Allied Command called on 12,000,000 foreign workers in Germany for active resistance.

***SEPTEMBER 26, Tuesday*** *1,851st day*

**Western Front.**—Allied salient from Eindhoven extended east to the Maas.

**Air.**—R.A.F. dropped 3,500 tons of bombs on Calais and Gris Nez.

**Italy.**—Allied troops crossed the Uso (Rubicon) north of Rimini.

## Flash-backs

**1939**

September 17. *Soviet troops entered Poland. Courageous sunk.*

**1940**

September 15. *Battle of Britain at climax; 185 German aircraft shot down.*

September 17. *City of Benares, taking children to Canada, sunk by U-boat.*

**1941**

September 16. *Germans claimed to be in Leningrad suburbs.*

September 21. *Russians evacuated Kiev after 45 days' fight.*

**1942**

September 16. *Germans fighting in outskirts of Stalingrad.*

September 23. *Antananarivo, Madagascar, captured by British.*

**1943**

September 14. *French Commandos landed on island of Corsica.*

September 16. *Australians captured Lae, in New Guinea.*

September 25. *Smolensk captured by Red Army.*

# THE WAR IN THE AIR

*by* Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

THE strategic purpose of the 1st Allied Airborne Army has been well demonstrated in its employment in Holland. The first landings were made from noon on Sunday, September 17, 1944, at Nijmegen, Eindhoven and Arnhem, to secure the vital crossings of the water-belt of the Meuse and the Rhine delta, to assist the advance of Field-Marshal Montgomery's army group over this difficult country. The day's operations involved almost 1,500 transport aircraft and several hundred gliders. (See story in p. 345, and illus. p. 349.)

Time and again during this war—in the German invasion of France, in the jumps of the Eighth Army across the North African desert, in the German and Russian drives across the Steppes—it was evident that the maximum forward surge of an armoured and mechanized army is today in the neighbourhood of 400 miles. When this distance has been covered it is necessary to halt, to obtain supplies in the forward areas, and to regroup those units which have become separated into an ordered, integrated army that is once more able to break down the resistance which time has given the enemy opportunity to organize. This was the position which Field-Marshal Montgomery's army group appeared to have reached when the Allied Airborne Army of British, American and Polish troops literally leapt into the battle zone ahead of the ground army.

It seems to have been taken for granted by the general public (so accustomed has it become to miracles of organization) that the Airborne Army should have left England, to be fighting in Holland two hours later. Yet this was no less than a third invasion of Europe from the west. The air column of troop transports, tugs and gliders took two hours to pass over the English coast, stretching for 300 miles across the sky, so that the invasion was accomplished at a speed of 150 m.p.h.

THIS is about the same speed as that of the Junkers 52 air-transports used by the Germans which have fallen easily in large numbers to British, American and Russian fighter pilots. The German attempt to reinforce Tunisia in the later stages of that campaign brought disaster to convoy after convoy of these aircraft. Their greatest success was in Crete in 1941, when there was almost no fighter opposition. How different is the position in reverse today. We have larger airborne forces than the Germans possessed. We fly them to battle in greater numbers in a single convoy. But the Luftwaffe is powerless to interfere.

The Airborne Army convoy flying to Holland was protected by a huge escort of fighters, which formed a protective arch above the columns of flying fighting men, and the Luftwaffe was unable to put any aircraft into the air to attack the Allied aircraft during the landings. In advance of the operation, Allied fighters and bombers flying by day and night crushed ground opposition by destroying more than 100 enemy flak positions within the operational area.

ON the next day, almost as many aircraft and gliders flew reinforcements and supplies to the fighting units of the 1st Airborne Army. Allied losses in the two days were only two per cent. The weather was ideal for the landing of this greatest air invasion in history, with little wind to make the drops hazardous for the parachutists, and with clear vision for the glider pilots. On the second day Eindhoven was taken, the first large Dutch town to be freed from the Germans. By Thursday 11,500 sorties had been flown and operations were continuing.

### ARMOUR Co-operated with the Airborne Troops

The airborne landings and the tank thrust of the ground army were co-ordinated. While the airborne troops held key-points in a corridor running north-north-eastwards, the armour swept towards them, crossing undamaged bridges at St. Oedenrode, Vechel and Grave. On Thursday, September 21, British tanks crossed the Rhine at Nijmegen (see illus. p. 325) and thrust on towards Arnhem, nodal point of the last river barrier whose possession was being bitterly contested between the German defenders and the airborne invaders. The crossing of the River Lek (arm of the Rhine) there would have taken the most northerly army of the Western invasion forces to the plains that run eastward to Berlin and south-eastward to the heart of the Ruhr at Essen; but this crossing failed, and the remainder, some 2,000 men, of the British 1st Airborne Division were withdrawn south across the Lek on the night following Monday, September 25.

Everywhere the air activity of the Allies rises to fresh endeavours. Polish parachute commandos were dropped on Warsaw on September 19 by bombers. Fortresses dropped supplies to the Polish defenders of Warsaw in daylight and flew on to alight in Russia. While the Canadians were battling into Boulogne the R.A.F. dropped 3,500 tons of bombs on the German defences in the city. Cities ahead of the American armies were heavily bombed. The hopeless plight of the Luftwaffe is made clear by the official statement that only 200 German aircraft were put into the air against 5,000 Allied planes on D-Day. The Red Air Force has raided Budapest and other targets in Hungary. The growing effect of the Balkan debacle is followed by reports of German withdrawals from Crete and Greece.

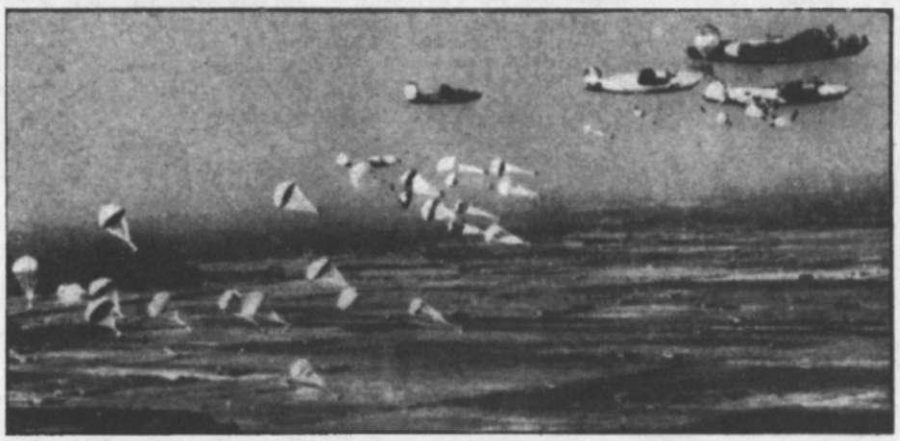
**AIR CHIEF MARSHAL SIR A. TEDDER, Deputy Supreme Cmdr. Allied Expeditionary Force (right), discussed plans with Lieut.-Gen. F. A. M. Browning, C.B., D.S.O., Deputy Cmdr. 1st Allied Airborne Army, before the start of the invasion of Holland.** *Photo, British Official*

The lost reverse side of the picture was found by U.S. troops, advancing through Brittany, in German guides printed for German parachute troops who were to have invaded South-West England. Marked "For Service Use Only," the guides contained photographs taken by spies before the war, including the Truro, St. Austell, Newquay, Ponsanooth viaducts and the Brunel Saltash-bridge across the Tamar. Many of these photographs, taken for an invasion that never came off, were probably filmed by cadets of the German training battleship Schleswig-Holstein which visited south-west England in 1938 and who freely roamed the countryside with cameras. Ribbentrop, when Ambassador, made a close study of Cornwall.

For the U.S. Navy is reported the mightiest Sea-Air Force, with 100 aircraft carriers by the end of this year. It looks as though Americans will possess the most powerful surface and air-cover Navy in the world.

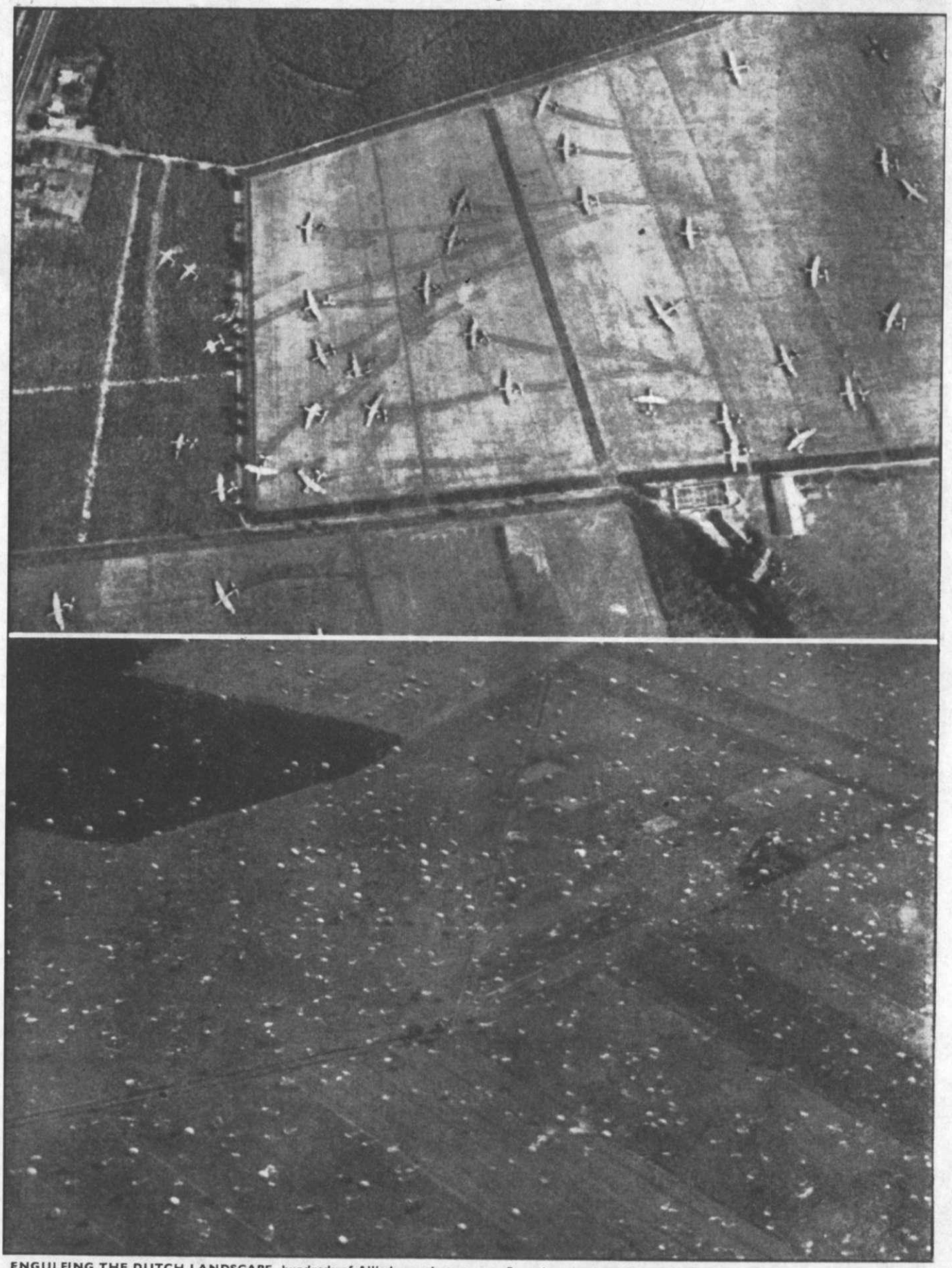
ON September 15 Allied forces landed in Palau and Halmahera islands, both spearheads for the Philippines, fewer than 500 miles distant. In Peleliu airfield in the Palaus, U.S. Marines captured the finest airfield in the Western Carolines, but fierce fighting continued on the island where the Japanese garrison resisted strongly. On September 17, U.S. troops landed on Anguar, most southerly island of the Palaus. The rocket weapon is coming more and more into use; 10,000 were used against the Japanese in the Carolines. This British invention was freely handed to the Americans for their war use.

The Philippines have come in for heavier bombings, especially Davao, in Mindanao, almost due west of Peleliu and due north of Halmahera in the Moluccas. Manila, capital of the Philippines, was attacked by a carrier-borne force which destroyed 250 Japanese aircraft and several ships. On September 18 British carrier-borne forces heavily damaged Sigli railway repair and maintenance centre in Sumatra; Barracudas dropped heavy bombs under the protection of Corsair fighters; one aircraft was lost in this operation, which formed part of a softening-up programme in Sumatra and the East Indies from the west.



**DROPPING SUPPLIES BY PARACHUTE, B.24 Liberators of the U.S. 8th Army Air Force swooped over the Dutch countryside, as troops of the 1st Allied Airborne Army waited below for vital supplies and equipment. The landscape was strewn with the gliders and discarded parachutes of our men who had landed in the rear of the enemy.** *Photo, U.S. Official*

# 1st Allied Airborne Army Descends on Holland



**ENGULFING THE DUTCH LANDSCAPE,** hundreds of Allied parachute troops floated to earth on September 17, 1944 (bottom). Following these came the gliders : each is seen at the end of a skid-track made in landing (top). This mighty armada of troop transports, glider-tugs and gliders swept out from England, over the North Sea and the water-barriers of Holland to land in the enemy rear. Later, land forces of the British 2nd Army linked up with the airborne troops at Eindhoven and Nijmegen. See story in p. 345.



*Photos, British Official*

# Exploits of Our Special Air Service

Col. D. STIRLING wearing the regimental badge of the S.A.S., of which he was co-founder and first commanding officer.

DRAMATIC secret of the war, the existence of a unit of British parachutists who penetrate enemy territory, raid airfields, destroy planes on the ground, upset communications and ambush transport columns, was revealed when the story of the Special Air Service (S.A.S.) was officially released after the liberation of Paris. It was the S.A.S., which had been in action first in Africa and later in Italy, that was largely responsible for the swift Allied advance in France that thrilled and astonished the world. These small groups of specialists caused chaos and panic deep behind the enemy lines and disorganized resistance long before the break-through of the main Allied armies.

The S.A.S. was created by two young officers, Lt. (later Col.) David Stirling of the Scots Guards and Commandos, and Lt. Jock Lewis of the Welsh Guards and Commandos. Their theory was that small groups of hand-picked specialists could operate with great effect behind enemy lines, specially to deal with the menace of the Me.109s which were able to harass unchecked convoys and troops in the darkest days of the African campaign.

Those two officers were given permission to start a school in the desert, called "Stirling's Rest Camp," where the first 73 volunteers from the 8th and 11th Commandos were put through a training devised by Lt. Lewis which applied to officers and men alike. Each recruit had to be a parachutist; he had to be an expert in the use of small arms and in close combat, and he had to be tough enough to endure a 100-mile march with a heavy pack.

## The Long Range Desert Group

The first operation of the S.A.S. in Africa was carried out on November 18, 1941, in a 30 m.p.h. wind against a German aerodrome; it ended in disaster and the S.A.S. lost about half of their numbers. The second attempt was in December 1941, when men of the S.A.S. flew to Galio, 90 miles south of Benghazi, surrounded the aerodromes and attacked aircraft and Luftwaffe personnel with success beyond their most ambitious dreams. They were taken close to their objectives by the Long Range Desert Group with whom henceforth they were to collaborate closely. The success of those marauding parties increased with experience. In 1942 they tried the experiment of travelling in jeeps, each mounted with two twin-sets of Vickers aerial M.G.s and one single Vickers. As a result the jeep was officially adopted as ideal for S.A.S. work. Fed and equipped by secret Long Range Desert Group patrols, S.A.S. would stay behind the German lines, sometimes for two months at a time, causing havoc among enemy military concentrations.

S.A.S. PATROL set off cheerfully on a hundred-miles' desert trek to rejoin their lines. Men of this special unit, attached to the 8th Army, were the first to establish contact with the 1st Army in Tunisia.

By September 1942 the unit, still shrouded in secrecy, had grown to 300 strong. Except for 30 Frenchmen it was entirely British, with a ratio of officers to men of about 1 to 10. During the famous 8th Army push, the S.A.S. were operating behind the German lines all the way; they were the first to effect the link-up of the 1st and 8th Armies in the last stages of the Tunisian campaign. It was during this operation that Col. Stirling was captured. As Lieut. Lewis had been killed in an earlier raid, Lieut.-Col. R. B. Mayne now took command of the unit.

His task was to start the invasion of Sicily and to eliminate the coastal batteries; S.A.S. destroyed four of them and took over 500 prisoners. Four days later they were landed farther up the coast to storm Fort Augusta, and after another re-embarkation made a new landing at Bagnara, where they took the first German prisoners of the campaign.

The effectiveness of these operations called for expansion, and early in 1943 further units of the S.A.S. were formed from the nucleus of a small force which had been used to raid the coast of France. Operations were undertaken in North Africa and Sicily, but the real chance came when Italy was invaded. Now Col. Stirling's ideas came into full effect in the mountainous country.

The first task of the detachment was to act as reconnaissance for the Airborne Division which landed at Taranto, and at Termoli they helped a Special Reserve Brigade to fend off the first serious German counter-attack. During the advance, the emphasis on initiative and independence which marked the training of the S.A.S. paid high dividends. Led by a young cavalry officer who had escaped from Greece, they harried the enemy ceaselessly. A member of the expedition described their progress as a stalking match which was won by the quickest man on the draw.

## They Commandeered a Train

S.A.S. parties had special success in a kind of Robin Hood system of operations against the German and Italian Fascists. They captured a Carabinieri barracks, and commandeered one of the King of Italy's cars and 3,000 gallons of petrol. On another occasion they surprised a German unit preparing an ambush for them. It so happened that the ambush was ambushed! A French Squadron commandeered an Italian train and drove it through enemy country to a concentration camp where they captured the guards, released the prisoners and brought the whole party, including the Italian colonel commandant, back by train.

Another exploit was the destruction of an important railway bridge. After being landed by the Royal Navy, a small S.A.S. party mined the bridge and then lured the carabinieri, who should have been guarding it, on to it just in time for the bridge to be blown up—together with the guards. During many of these operations the S.A.S. received valuable help from the Italian Navy.

Recently a SHAEF communiqué referred for the first time to the S.A.S. by name and to the manner of work they were doing behind enemy lines in France. But not until the war is over will it be possible to do full justice to their exploits; these stories will add honour to their regimental badge, a winged dagger bearing the words, "Who Dares Wins."

IN THE ENEMY'S REAR during the 8th Army's push through Libya, S.A.S. men continually harassed the coastal road from Tripoli to Sart. Riding in jeeps, they sometimes adopted the head-dress worn by Arabs (above). A French parachutist is seen handing cigarettes to Arab soldiers of the Tunisian Army (centre). *Photos, British Official*

# Editor's Postscript

I HARDLY pick up a paper or review without finding suggestions as to what should be done with Germany when fighting stops in Europe. But there may be no formal ending of the War. No body of Germans with whom we could negotiate is yet in sight. The Nazis might attempt to carry on sporadic guerilla warfare, and it would take some time to exterminate them. But that's the idea of a pessimistic friend of mine, it's not my idea. But in that case Germans would no doubt be fighting against one another in civil conflict. What should we be doing in the meantime? Presumably trying to establish some sort of stable government in Germany. It will be necessary, Mr. Pethick-Lawrence has been saying, to "find a substitute for the whole Nazi structure, which extended from the judges to the teachers, the typists and the messengers." For this we shall have to rely on Germans "whose record would justify their employment." How difficult this will be is shown by the eagerness of people in the towns of the Reich already occupied by Allied troops to explain that they never had any use for Hitler or Nazism and will be very glad to see the last of them. Would you trust such assurances? Would you believe what those people said? I see that Montgomery still stands by his forecast that the War will end this year, but puts the date nearer Christmas than Patton, who is for October 31. Montgomery, most inspiring of all our great soldiers, has never let us down in achievement or in judgement of events, but after Arnhem, even he sounds optimistic to me now!

NEVER has there been a war which devastated so many places familiar to very large numbers of the people who follow its course on the map. As soon as the invasion of Europe had started names began to be mentioned which many of us knew as those of pleasant little seaside places on the Normandy coast, simple and cheap and much frequented by Parisians because they were only a short distance away, and inland towns that tourists know well, such as Caen and Avranches. Then came Mont St. Michel and Brittany. Next, the Riviera came into the picture—St. Raphael, Cannes, Nice, Mentone. Then Belgium, which for long has been a favourite holiday ground for British travellers who do not want to travel far. Bruges, Antwerp, Brussels, Ostend, the Ardennes awakened memories of delightful trips like that which Thackeray described in one of his Roundabout Papers. And then Aix-en-Chapelle, Germanized into the ugly name Aachen, and Cologne, where so many of us have gazed at the Cathedral and the Rhine and bought the original Eau de Cologne at the shop *gegenüber dem Julichsplatz*. Is it still there, I wonder?

HOW important it may be in coming years to attract visitors to our country is fortunately being realized. Mr. Ernest Bevin dwelt on it in his speeches on the Catering Act, as this went through the House of Commons. The Government is now being asked to appoint "an official national tourist organization." At Glasgow a school for future hotel managers has been opened, and another is to follow in London. But, of course, the best way to learn hotel-management is to go in at the bottom and pass through all branches of it. Swiss and German hoteliers used to send their sons round to learn the trade in this way. They knew every aspect of the job and all its most intimate details, from dish-washing to managing a large staff and planning meals. British hotels are, as a rule, badly-managed because so many of them are under the rule of men or women without any training at all. Unless we alter this—"reform it altogether," as Hamlet says—we shall not succeed in persuading tourist agencies to send us the visitors we shall need.

WHY shall we need them more than we have done in the past? Because we must have something fresh to exchange for all the foods and other commodities we want from other lands. Our exports which paid for these used to be mainly cotton and woollen goods, coal, iron, steel and motors. But now so many nations that took these things from us are producing them within their own borders. Our largest export in the years just before this war was machinery, which enabled the purchasers to make at home all sorts of articles they once bought from us. Another help to us in paying for our imports used to be the interest on our very large foreign investments. This interest, paid in the currency of the countries which owed it, was turned into fruit or wheat or maize or timber (to take a few examples), and these cargoes were sent here in exchange for our coal or cotton pieces or motors or iron and steel. Now those investments have been heavily reduced, and also the shipping and banking services we rendered to the rest of the world have shrunk. So we must look elsewhere—and tourist traffic would be a great help.

"AS drunk as goats." Thus an American officer described some Germans who were captured in a state of inebriety. Why goats? I am sure goats do not get drunk. They are, like all animals, abstemious, not eating more than they require, not needing stimulants to buck them up. I have often thought we are unfair to many animals when we compare human beings with them. Why "sick as a cat"? Why "dirty dog!" as a term of abuse? Why call anyone who is greedy or unclean in person a pig? Pigs prefer to live in clean sties, and, if fed regularly, show no indecent rapture over their food. "Brave as a lion" is complimentary, but untrue. Lions are not courageous by nature. "Timid as a mouse" suggests quite wrongly that mice are more nervy than other very small beasts. "Stupid as a hen" may seem justified, if you have had occasion, as I have, to study the habits of hens. But, after all, they do lay fresh eggs. Isn't the stupidity rather on the part of the officials who prevent our getting them fresh? I live near a farm which has to send its eggs away somewhere—nobody knows their destination, but they are sure to be stale when they get there—and I have to put up with stale ones from some other part of the country.

ADMIRAL SIR W. H. COWAN, K.C.B., M.V.O., 73 years of age, was awarded a Bar to his D.S.O., it was announced on Sept. 4, 1944. As Commando Liaison Officer, he took part in a reconnaissance raid on Mt. Ornito, Italy, and rescued a wounded colonel under fire. PAGE 351 *Photo, News Chronicle*

"THOSE Germans certainly didn't get drunk on British beer!" a soldier friend of mine said bitterly when he heard about them. Complaints of the weakness of our national brew reach me from all sides. Dilution is admitted. It is unavoidable if the vastly increased demand for beer is to be met. The brewers get the same quantities of materials as they did before, but owing to (1) the scarcity of whisky and wines and (2) the fact that people have more money to spend and little else to spend it on, the increase this year in the number of barrels consumed is round about a million. That tells its own story. The best beer is made by local firms which do not send it out of their own area. They can keep up a fairly high standard and supply all who want it. What goes to the troops and the Navy and Air Force is specially brewed in order that it may keep. It is possibly stronger than your "local" can offer.

I FIND it strange that anyone should think of suggesting that horses should once more be used on a large scale in war. Some seem to want cavalry regiments to be mounted again instead of being packed into tanks and armoured cars. They have evidently never seen a battlefield in days when horses were ridden by cavalrymen and harnessed to guns and artillery supply carts. Never have the horrors of war been so burned into my imagination as they were by the sight of the poor creatures rolling in agony or lying exhausted while life drained slowly from them, or galloping up and down in a frenzy of fear and pain. It is one of the advantages of mechanized warfare that we do not now force these beautiful and highly-strung animals to undergo torture and misery for our benefit. Return to that system would be barbarous. It is no more than a wishful dream in the heads of people who would like to bring back cavalry because of its appearance and romantic associations.

I HEARD some indignant comments on the result of a quiz among soldiers as to the most eminent women in Britain. It appears the only eminent woman most of the soldiers could think of was Jane of the Daily Mirror. The indignant commentators had never heard of this lady. I was able to inform them that she appears daily in a strip cartoon in various stages of undress. I confess it never occurred to me that she could be of interest to grown men. However, it is now quite evident that she is, and I really do not see why any fuss should be made about it. Some of us prefer looking at the Venus of Milo or Botticelli's Primavera, but "everyone to his taste," and there is nothing new in the discovery that the great majority of men and women are blind to beauty and easily caught by the merely showy or the commonplace. I ventured to inquire of the indignant ones if they had ever done anything calculated to improve the taste of the masses. They looked down their noses and one muttered, "Can't be improved." To which I answered, "Then why worry?"

# Monty the Conqueror at Historic Vimy Ridge

**THE CANADIAN WAR MEMORIAL** on Vimy Ridge, unveiled by King Edward VIII on July 26, 1936, was visited in early September 1944 by Field-Marshal Montgomery shortly after our men had swept beyond in the great dash to Belgium. The leader of the victorious 21st Army Group (British 2nd Army and Canadian 1st) is in reflective mood as he pauses on the steps of this impressive Memorial, north-east of Arras, which commemorates the heroic spirit of our kinsmen who fought and fell at the historic battlefield in the 1914-18 war. *Photo, British Official*

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